

# LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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## CONTENTS.

|  | PAGE                                  |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Works by George MacDonald . . . . .           | <i>British Quarterly Review</i> , 707 |
| 2. Lady Macbeth. By Fanny Kemble . . . . .       | <i>Macmillan's Magazine</i> , 724     |
| 3. Tornadoes. By Richard A. Proctor . . . . .    | <i>Temple Bar</i> , 731               |
| 4. About One's First Night at the Play . . . . . | <i>New Monthly Magazine</i> , 735     |
| 5. All For Greed. Part iv. . . . .               | <i>Saint Paul's</i> , 744             |
| 6. Women in Miniature . . . . .                  | <i>Victoria Magazine</i> , 754        |
| 7. Occult Personal Influence . . . . .           | " " 756                               |
| 8. Brazil. Professor Agassiz . . . . .           | <i>Saturday Review</i> , 760          |
| 9. Should Married Women Dance? . . . . .         | <i>Imperial Review</i> , 762          |
| 10. Mr. Gladstone on Sir Walter Scott . . . . .  | <i>Examiner</i> , 763                 |
| 11. Valetudinarian Christianity . . . . .        | <i>Tomahawk</i> , 764                 |
| 12. The Religion of Self . . . . .               | " " 765                               |
| 13. Sir David Brewster . . . . .                 | <i>Examiner</i> , 767                 |
| 14. Colouring Matter of Bird's Plumage . . . . . | <i>Once a Week</i> , 753              |

POETRY: — The True Solitary, 706. The Star in the East, 706. La Divina Speranza, 706. The Two Villages, 743. Sensitiveness, 767. Mustered Out, 768. The Hungry Sea, 768.

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## THE TRUE SOLITARY.

I BUILT my nest in solitude,  
I built it far away,  
Mid cliffs that rise above the sea,  
Where scarce the wild goats stray.

The cawing rook above my head,  
Below — the murmuring sea,  
And, busy in the scented thyme,  
The low hum of the bee.

Here then, beside the broad blue sea  
That stretcheth wide its arms,  
I'll feed a solitary heart  
With Nature's peerless charms.

And here, forgetful of the past,  
Its fever and its strife,  
I'll lean upon her quiet lap  
And rest my tired life.

Ah foolish thought! not Nature's sweets  
Are fraught with healing balm,  
Restoring to the wounded heart  
Its innocence and calm.

Not Nature's tenderest voice can soothe  
The human spirit's fret,  
Nor charm to rest the haunted life  
Of Memory and Regret.

Vainly we build the lofty nest  
If self may still intrude —  
A silence more intense be mine,  
A deeper solitude.

Lead me into the wilderness  
From my own self apart;  
Lead me, Thou Master of my life,  
And whisper to my heart. —

The freshness of the ocean breeze  
No longer fans my brow;  
I hear not, waving over head  
The rustling of the bough;

I miss the sunset's golden light  
Upon the wooded hill;  
Earth's thousand magic melodies  
Are silent all and still;

But gentler than the evening air  
Which stirs the aspen grove,  
Breathes o'er my restlessness of soul  
The spirit of Thy love.

And though no longer o'er the moor  
I pass with footstep free,  
I find the freedom of my heart  
In lonely hours with Thee.

Then let me build my solitude,  
Not in the rocky cave;  
Nor where the rose and eglantine  
Their flowering tendrils wave,

Nor where the floods lift up their voice,  
Nor where the sea-birds dwell,  
And mountain winds sweep wildly past  
A lonely hermit's cell,

But in the garden of Thy Love,  
Fenced in from all beside,  
Wherever Thou dost choose my path,  
So but Thy hand may guide.

— *The Month.*

## TWO PICTURES.

## I.

## WARREN'S PICTURE, "THE STAR IN THE EAST."

In the soft darkness of the Eastern night,  
The vast, calm, sapphire heaven above them  
spread,  
The Gentle Kings are journeying towards the  
Light,  
Crossing the desert plain with silent tread.

Casting faint shadows on the gleaming sand,  
Behind them sinks the moon's pale-silver  
horn;  
Before them, hanging o'er the Promised Land,  
The bright Star beckons where their Lord is  
born.

So through this desert world, O Christ! we  
roam,  
Its dim, reflected lights thus wane and sink;  
But if within our hearts Thou hast a home,  
We dwell already on the Heaven's brink.  
S.

## II.

## GUIDO'S PICTURE, "LA DIVINA SPERANZA."

With eyes upraised to heaven, hands join'd in  
pray'r,  
And meek devotion in her earnest air,  
See Hope Divine, the tear yet scarcely dry,  
Her sorrows lost in aspiration high:  
Her tresses, loosely bound, float carelessly, —  
From her fair shoulder fall'n unconsciously  
Her mantle pale, in many a graceful fold,  
Unnoticed rests on arm of finest mould:  
Angelic purity breathes from her face,  
And to its sweetness lends a loftier grace:  
No thought unworthy in that bosom glows,  
No wish unholy from those pure lips flows;  
Chasten'd, yet firm, the fitful struggle o'er,  
On earth-born succour she relies no more,  
But looking up, she feels that Heaven denies  
No needful strength, whate'er the sacrifice.  
Bliss dawns upon her soul, — celestial hues  
A softer radiance o'er her form diffuse,  
Still trembling, though her sisters, Faith and  
Love,  
Enraptured beckon to their home above.  
— *Spectator.* M.

From The British Quarterly Review.

WORKS BY GEORGE MACDONALD.

- (1.) *Within and Without.* A Dramatic Poem. Longmans.
- (2.) *Poems.* Longmans.
- (3.) *Phantastes.* A Faerie Romance. Smith, Elder, & Co.
- (4.) *The Portent.* A Story of the Second Sight. Smith, Elder, & Co.
- (5.) *David Elginbrod.* A Novel. 3 vols. Hurst & Blackett.
- (6.) *Alec Forbes of Howglen.* 3 vols. Hurst & Blackett.
- (7.) *Adela Cathcart.* 3 vols. Hurst & Blackett.
- (8.) *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood.* Alexander Strahan.
- (9.) *Unspoken Sermons.* Alexander Strahan.
- (10.) *Robert Falconer.* Alexander Strahan.
- (11.) *Guild Court.* Alexander Strahan.
- (12.) *Poems.* Alexander Strahan.

&c. &c. &c.

PERHAPS the first impression derived from a perusal of George MacDonald's writings is that of their originality; but along with this impression comes another which might be thought to be inconsistent with it, namely, that the mind of their author has been the subject of many and varied influences, and that the originality by which it is now distinguished folds up in its embrace a host of derivative elements. No inconsistency is necessarily implied; for one originality is not as another originality. There is an originality of the rock in the sea, and an originality of the cultured garden; an originality, rugged and bare, with footing only for a little company of sea-birds, and no music save that of the spray and the gale, and the long roll of ocean in chasm and cave; and an originality of waving blooms and clustered fruits and softly swelling foliage, to which has gone much digging, trenching, casting of seed, pruning, training, watering, but which attests itself in an indestructible something, revealed alike in fruit and flower, in leaf and petal, derived from the natural quality of the soil.

George MacDonald's literary originality is of the latter kind. He has had many soul-gardeners, and seeds from provinces widely remote from each other have lodged in his mind. In one volume, or in one page of a volume, we are reminded of the legendary tale (*märchen*) which plays so important a part in the literature of the Germans; the legendary tale of enchantment and mys-

tery, of wizards, fays, and moonlit grottoes, in which the imagination of a race born and bred in woods, an imagination sombre, wayward, delighting in the vast, the awful, the mysterious, arraying itself in clouds and forest-glooms, yet with intense sun-bursts of passion and enthusiasm breaking through, has found congenial employment. It was said by a skilled critic, that Tieck, very eminent in this department, would have been proud to have written MacDonald's *Phantastes*. We have no doubt of it; and he would have had cause: for if we may found an opinion on a limited acquaintance with the writings of Tieck, he was capable of nothing that would bear comparison with the work of MacDonald. In another volume, or in another page of the same volume, we are haunted with reminiscences—strangely blended—of Spenser and Novalis, the allegorical painting of the one brooded over by the spirit of mystical devoutness which breathes in the visions of the other. Then we leave dream and allegory behind, and Jean Paul seems to be our companion as we behold an exultant sympathy streaming out upon the visible world of man and of nature, scattering the dewdrops of fancy upon sward and branch, flashing into the eyes of child and old man, rejoicing in the beauty of the world, laughing and clapping its hands till rock and valley ring. Anon, a stiller, deeper influence breathes around; we are aware of a meditative, earnest, venerable presence; a white, calm brow and very thoughtful eye, and priest-like hands lifted up to bless the world in the name of the Lord, and mouth uttering marvellous things, hard to understand, respecting the sympathy of man with the spirit of nature, and the life that is in stars, and hills, and primroses. To our lip rises the name of Wordsworth. Nor are thus indicated more than a few of the influences which have acted upon the mind of George MacDonald. Among the older masters, Shakespeare, Dante, Bacon, and Milton have left most visibly the impress of their power upon him; and among the writers of his own day, old enough to stand to him in the relation of preceptors, a specially direct and vigorous influence has been exerted by Mr. Maurice, an influence potent in shaping his opinions, and in suggesting those ideas which play a principal part in his system and habit of thought. But beneath these complex and multitudinous influences, the strong personality of MacDonald not only makes itself felt, but asserts its supremacy. He reflects and represents; but whatever he receives from his time, or from past times, becomes his

own. The flame of his genius fuses into a vivid unity all the possessions of his mind. There is not one of the men we have named touching whom it would not be incorrect to say that George MacDonald is his pupil and disciple. But this personality is an ultimate fact, and, like other ultimate facts, it admits not of exact description; it is the indefinable something which is the secret of the individual nature; and if we catch a glimpse or two of it as we proceed, we shall do well.

There can be no doubt, for one thing, that in the original outfit and capital on which George MacDonald has traded, the contribution made by his Scottish birthplace and training was considerable. It were easy to exaggerate the importance of the Scottish element in his moral and intellectual composition; but it is unquestionably one organic element; and he has already given to the world delineations of Scottish scenery, and of Scottish life and manners, more remarkable than any which have appeared since the time of Scott. Whatever the excellences or the defects of these, they have a character of their own; a character unmistakably and profoundly Scottish, and yet so strongly distinguished from that of the Scottish delineations of Sir Walter, that they might seem to belong to a different country. We may, indeed, remark in passing, that an interesting illustration of the richness of human nature, viewed as the subject-matter of art, and of the opulence of material for scenical description possessed by even a little bit of God's world, is afforded in the fact that Scotland, after Burns had sung and Scott had written, presented fresh fields and pastures new to the genius of MacDonald. All countries rich in river, hill, and seaboard, with climate advantageous to health, and soil fitted either for vineyards or for cornfields, have produced a form of existence favourable to artistic representation — a vivid, hearty, melodious, mirthful, earnest life, — and poets able to set the picture of that life to music. So it was in Greece; so in Palestine; so it has been in Scotland: but it is an astonishing thing to say of any country and of any people, that the materials they present for artistic delineation were not exhausted by two such writers as Robert Burns and Walter Scott. We do not affirm that George MacDonald has as yet earned a right to be named with these; he is not old as an author, and his genius, much as it has already done, has not, unless we are much mistaken, achieved its masterpiece; he has not the broad flashing humour of Burns, or his mighty stroke in

satire, or his command over the fire-fountains of passion; nor has he shown a power of characterization comparable with that of Scott; but it is true, nevertheless, that he has entered a province of Scottish character and manners into which Scott never ventured, and into which Burns cast, at most, a few hasty glances.

All that is most picturesque and racy in Scotland and Scotchmen — all that lies on the surface or near the surface — was rendered by Scott. Few of the main types of the national character escaped him. Burns struck a deeper note in the passionate tenderness of his best lyrics, which seem to come from 'the heart within the heart' of Scotland; and his 'Cottar's Saturday Night' is a faithful, unadorned, most expressive and impressive piece of historical painting from that region of domestic life in which the religion of Scotland has played so benign a part. But neither in Scott nor in Burns do we meet with any delineation of the religion of Scotland, as it frequently displays itself in individual natures of thoughtfulness and emotional depth. That religion is none the less characteristically Scottish for the circumstance that it may present itself as a reaction against, or in the way of reflection and comment upon, the especial type of theology which is embodied in the formularies of the Presbyterian churches of Scotland. Such is the religion which is portrayed by George MacDonald in David Elginbrod and other characters in his works, and it is portrayed with skill, felicity, and precision.

David Elginbrod's version of Christianity admits of brief and definite statement. In the Bible, in the world, in time, in eternity, he will see nothing but the expansion or the interpretation of the sentence, 'God is Love.' We have the key to his whole creed in the few following words of conversation between him and Hugh Sutherland, a young student with whom he is on terms of close friendship: —

'But (says Sutherland) you seem to me to make out that God is nothing but love!'

'Ay, naething but love. What for no?'

'Because we are told He is just.'

'Would He be lang just if He didna lo'e us?'

'But does He not punish sin?'

'Would it be any kindness not to punish sin? Not to use a' means to pit awa' the ae ill thing frae us? Whatever may be meant by the place o' meesery, depen' upo't, Mr. Sutherland, it's only anither form o' love, love shinin' through the fogs o' ill, an' sae gart leuk (made to look) something verra different thereby. Man, rather nor see my Maggy (his



only daughter] — an' ye'll no doot 'at I lo'e her — rather nor see my Maggy do an ill thing, I'd see her lyin' deid at my feet. But supposin' the ill thing ance dune, it's no at my feet I wad lay her, but upo' my heart, wi' my auld arms about her, to haud the further ill aff o' her. An' shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker? O my God! My God!

This expression of boundless trust in the love of God, with resolute acceptance of evil as the shadow which gives completeness to the victory of light, is accurately descriptive of the intellectual groundwork on which many a devout Scotchman of the present day has learned to base his religion; but MacDonald's knowledge of his countrymen is brought out, not merely in the statement of David Elginbrod's faith, but also in the account given of the relation in which his peculiar faith places him to his Calvinistic neighbours. There is considerable interest in this matter, and it is worth inquiring into for a few moments.

An Englishman, turning to the Confession of Faith, the principal formulary of all Presbyterian churches, and reading the chapter 'of God's eternal decree,' concludes that the relation in question can be none other than that of irreconcilable opposition and frank hostility. 'By the decree of God,' we read in that chapter, 'for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.' Everlasting death, as we learn in a subsequent chapter, includes 'all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.' Yet David Elginbrod, though making no mystery of his belief in universal redemption, and even in universal ultimate salvation, is deemed sufficiently orthodox by those about him to be asked to become an elder of the congregation; and, though he declines to go this length, he continues to worship in his parish church, and puts himself in no attitude of antagonism to his wife Janet and other strait-laced Calvinists.

'I'll tell ye what it is, Mr. Sutherland,' — thus he explains his position — 'the minister's a' richt in himself' an' sae's my Janet here, an' mony mair; an' aiblins (*perhaps*) there's a kin o' trowth in a' 'at they say; but this is my quarrel wi' a' thae words an' words an' arguments an' seemilies as they ca' them, an' doctrines, an' a'

that — they jist haud a pair body at airm's lenth oot ower frae God himself'. An' they raise a mist an' a stour a' aboot Him, 'at the pair bairn canna see the Father Himself', stan'in' wi' His arms streckit (*stretched*) out as wide's the heavens, to tak' the worn crater, — and the mair sinner, the mair welcome, — hame to His verra heart. Gin' (*if*) a body wad leave a' that, an' jist get fowk persuadit to speak a word or twa to God Him lane, the loss, in my opinyan, wad be unco sma', an' the gain verra great.'

This is said with reference to the Calvinistic doctrine of imputed righteousness, but its application to the theological views of David's neighbours generally is neither doubtful nor difficult. David felt that practically his views and theirs came to much the same thing. So they would, in Scotland; so they would not, in England; and Mr. MacDonald shows a fine sense of the difference between Calvinism as apprehended in England and Calvinism as apprehended in Scotland, when he represents David Elginbrod as remaining tolerant and silent in respect to a system from which, as laid down in the Confession of Faith, he would vehemently dissent. An Englishman, reading what we have quoted from the Confession, infers from the words, or rather understands them actually to say, that the tidings of salvation through Christ Jesus are not to be proclaimed freely and promiscuously to mankind. If only a definite and unchangeable number can be saved, is it not, he asks, mere mockery to cry out, 'Whosoever will, let him come and drink of the water of life freely?' The Scotchman is probably not less logical than the Englishman, but he is more reflective; and, pausing for a moment before he replies, he decides that neither mockery nor mendacity is necessarily involved in the position. In the first place, the preacher does not *know* whom God has chosen, and he has not the slightest ground for presuming that any man, woman, or child in his audience is not numbered with the blessed. In the second place, it was clearly stated by Calvin, and is insisted upon by the best Calvinistic theologians of Scotland, that in preaching the Gospel, regard is to be had to Scriptural example and to the latitude of Scriptural offers, without reference to what is called the decretive or secret will of God. Lastly, it will be found by all who think out the subject that, since the eternal destiny of God's creatures is fixed and foreknown only in the sense in which all conceivable events, past, present, and future, are fixed and foreknown, there is no reason deducible from the strictest logical formula of Calvin-

ism, why a man should not, without question asked, open his heart to Christ and accept salvation, which would not be equally valid to prevent him from sowing his field, or starting on a journey, or forming any resolution whatever. The practical result is that, in what is generally held to be the most Calvinistic country in Europe, the form of preaching which an Englishman commonly understands by Calvinism, that is to say, the express limitation of the Gospel offer to a few, is all but banished from the pulpit. The Chalmerses, Guthries, Cairds, Macleods, make offer of salvation in the name of Christ as freely, fully, cordially, as was ever done by John Wesley. It was this fact that was present to the mind of David Elginbrod; but only an author who had a nicely accurate acquaintance with modes of thought and feeling in Scotland would have represented it as familiar to his mind. No doubt the faith of Elginbrod goes farther than any Calvinist would go; he believes in universal salvation, though believing at the same time in the punishment of sin; but his faith in the ultimate salvation of all does not disturb his tolerance of what is the vital and energetic side of Scotch Calvinism, namely, its insistence upon the sovereignty of God, and its free and earnest offers of salvation.

For the rest, it must be admitted that David Elginbrod is to some extent an ideal and featureless portrait. He is an illumination in pure colours upon glass, rather than a living man. He wants bone. Set him beside Davie Deans, and the lack of rugged force in the characterization, as compared with that of Scott, cannot fail to be remarked. We do not see him enough in action, and what we have of his talk is too much in the way of set speeches. His prayers are exceedingly beautiful. One evening, when he had been gazing at the stars, his prayer at the family altar is this:—

'O Thou wha keeps the stars alicht, an' our souls burnin' wi' a licht aboon that o' the stars, grant that they may shine afore Thee as the stars for ever and ever. An' as Thou hauds the stars burnin' a' the night, whan there's no man to see, so haud Thou the light burnin' in our souls, whan we see neither Thee nor it, but are buried in the grave o' sleep and forgetfulness. Be Thou by us, even as a mother sits by the bedside o' her aillin' wean (child) a' the long night; only be Thou nearer to us, even in our verra souls, an' watch ower the warl' o' dreams that they make for themselfs. Grant that more an' more thoughts o' Thy thinking may come into our hearts day by day, till there shall be at last an open road atween Thee and

us, an' Thy angels may ascend and descend upon us, so that we may be in Thy heaven, e'en while we are upo' thy earth. Amen.'

For at least two centuries the Calvinistic theology has played an important and a curiously interesting part in the moral and intellectual education of the Scotch. It was the opinion of Hugh Miller, one of the best of judges, that the influence of this theology in the pulpit and out of it has done more than aught else to give his countrymen that habit of cool and penetrating thought, that reflective sagacity and firmness of intellectual fibre, for which they are famed throughout the world. The grand point in education, whether of child or adult, is to bring the faculties into energetic action; and the species of mental activity to which Calvinism has prompted the Scotch is of no ignoble or trivial kind. Under various forms, in philosophy, in poetry, in mythological dream, in theological system, substantially one grand problem has pressed for solution upon the heart and brain of man. In the tents of Chaldaean sheiks, beneath the starry heavens, before Job was born; in the great old schools of Greek philosophy; in the night of Milton's blindness, when the vision of earth had faded, that the vision of heaven might beam more bright; in the mason-lodge of Tarbolton village, where Dr. Hornbook tackled the 'new-fangled notions' of an eloquent, dark-eyed lad, named Robert Burns; around ten thousand Scottish firesides in the evening, when a neighbour stepped in to have a 'crack'; the one ancient difficulty of 'justifying the ways of God to man,' and making out how love can be the law of the universe, when so palpably and terribly, wherever human eye can reach, 'the wages of sin is death,' has been discussed. It is a question which resolves itself into that other, of the origin of evil, which all men have now seen to be illimitable and interminable; and it is not bold, either in the way of faith or of scepticism, to affirm, at the present time of day, that it will never be finally settled in this world. Perhaps the urgent and practical spirit of the modern age, with its wealth of new facts fresh from the store-houses of nature, may divert the minds of our children from speculative questions which have interested all past generations. But this is by no means certain; and it is certain that, in merely apprehending the alternative positions in those old-world controversies, in considering the arguments on one side and the other, the intellectual faculties are powerfully exercised.

But it is not merely as affording an opportunity for the gymnastic play of the mind that Calvinism figures in George MacDonald's descriptions of Scottish character and manners. With a more fine and subtle touch he shows it as incidentally colouring and modifying the course of life, and bringing out the humours of character. The interview between Mr. Cowie, a simple-minded pastor, and Annie, a girl only a few years removed from infancy, whose father had recently died, is an example of this sort. Annie had gone to hear a sermon in one of those seceding chapels in which a more rigid Calvinism might generally be counted upon than was furnished in the parish church. Annie is the first speaker.

'He preached a gran' sermon, sir. But I haena been able to bide mysel' sin' syne. For I doubt I'm ane o' the wicked 'at God hates, and I'll never win to heaven at a', for I canna help forgettin', Him whiles. An' the wicked 'll be turned into hell, and a' the nations that forget God. That was his text, sir. And I canna bide it.'

In the bosom of the good man rose a gentle indignation against the schismatics who had thus terrified and bewildered that sacred being, a maid-child. But what could he say? He thought for a moment, and betook himself, in his perplexity, to his common sense.

'You haven't forgotten your father, have you Annie?' said he.

'I think about him maist ilka day,' answered Annie.

'But there comes a day now and then when you don't think much about him, does there not?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Do you think he would be angry with his child because she was so much taken up with her books or her play?'

'I never play at anything, sir.'

'Well — with learning songs to say to Alee Forbes and Willie MacWha — do you think he would be angry that you didn't think about him that day, especially when you can't see him?'

'Deed no, sir. He wadna be sae sair upo' me as that.'

'What would he say, do you think?'

'Gin Mr. Bruce were to cast it up to me, he wad say, "Lat alane the lassie. She'll think about me the morn — time eneuch."'

'Well, don't you think your Father in heaven would say the same?'

'Maybe He nicht, sir. But ye see my father was my ain father, and wad mak' the best o' me.'

'And is not God kinder than your father?'

'He canna weel be that, sir. And there's the Scripser.'

'But He sent His only Son to die for us.'

'Ay — for the elect, sir,' returned the little theologian.

Now this was more than Mr. Cowie was well prepared to meet, for certainly this terrible doctrine was perfectly developed in the creed of the Scotch Church; the assembly of divines having sat upon the Scripture egg till they had hatched it in their own likeness. Poor Mr. Cowie! There were the girl-eyes, blue and hazy, with tearful questions, looking at him hungrily. O starving little brothers and sisters! God does love you, and all shall be, and therefore is, well. But the minister could not say this, gladly as he would have said it if he could; and the only result of his efforts to find a suitable reply was, that he lost his temper — not with Annie, but with the doctrine of election.

'Gang ye hame, Annie, my bairn,' said he, talking Scotch now, 'and dinna trouble yer heid about election, and a' that. It's no' a canny doctrine. No mortal man could ever win at the bottom of it. I'm thinkin' we haena muckle to do wi't. Gang hame, dawtie, and say yer prayers to be preserved frae the wiles o' Sawtan. There's a sixpence to ye.'

His kind heart was sorely grieved that all it could give was money. She had asked for bread, and he had but a stone, as he thought, to give her. So he gave it her with shame. He might, however, have reversed the words of St. Peter, saying, 'Spiritual aid I have none, but such as I have give I thee;' and so offered her the sixpence. But, for my part, I think the sixpence had more of bread in it than any theology he might have been expected to have at hand; for, so given, it was the symbol and the sign of love, which is the heart of the Divine theology.

Little Red Riding Hood, agitated in the depths of her small being by the fear of impending damnation, on account of her exclusion from the number of the 'elect,' and presenting herself to her parish clergyman for consolation, is a figure new to literary art and not without interest. It is a figure which George MacDonald may easily have drawn from life. The worst practical effect of high Calvinistic preaching is that it leads precisely the most fine, tender, and humble souls into mazes of agonised self-questioning. Reckless men and women, of strong animal propensities, put the matter aside with careless fatalism. If they must be damned, they must; if they are of the elect, they will be effectually called some day; the whole affair they leave in other hands. Persons of less frank and hardy disposition, but perhaps a profounder and baser selfishness, have no great difficulty in satisfying themselves, after a period of real or affected mental suffering, that they are of the elect; and, though they are henceforth generally moral, and their zeal in

missionary and philanthropic enterprises may be counted on, there is to the last a tang of selfishness in their religion, and one duty in which they take special delight is that of sympathising with God's judgments upon all who are not of the peculiar people. But the conscientious and humble-minded child, and the young man or young woman of specially sensitive, self-accusing, sympathetic, and tender disposition, are apt to be tortured with doubts, which to them seem profane, respecting the benevolence of God to His creatures in general, and are prone to the belief that they in particular are not among the chosen. One of the most delicate, kindly, innocent, and beautiful natures that ever existed was that of William Cowper; and it is impossible not to see that it was the modesty, the noble diffidence, the self-depreciation of the man, which made it impossible for him to believe that, though others might be saved, he could be anything but a castaway. In the case of Cowper, a liability to mental disease existed from the first; but minds, like bodies, of delicate and exquisite organization, are specially liable to derangement; and there are probably few earnest Calvinistic pastors, either in England or in Scotland, who have not been perplexed and distressed to find that precisely those of their flock in whom the child-nature most prevailed, and whose emotions were most tremulously tender and true, had the greatest difficulty in attaining spiritual peace through the Calvinistic theology.

George MacDonald, however, is not blind to the grander aspects of character which Calvinism has produced in Scotland. In Thomas Crann, the stonemason, we have the Puritan type of man delineated with sympathetic and masterly skill, and it towers in lofty pre-eminence over lower forms of character. 'Surely it is something more to stand with Moses upon Mount Sinai, and see the back of God through ever so many folds of cloudy darkness, than be sitting down to eat and drink, or rising up to play about the golden calf, at the foot of the mountain.' Child Annie could see clearly that Thomas was possessed of some 'Divine secret,' and revered him accordingly. Perfect, unquestioning, unflinching submission to God's will, iron steadfastness of resolution in the performance of duty, entire uprightness and openness in all dealings, absolute fearlessness in regard to any power in the universe except the might of God — such were the qualities of Thomas Crann. 'Better be damned,' said Thomas, 'doing the will of God, than saved doing nothing.' After all, Calvinism,

when you see it in a great strong man — in a Cromwell, for example — is a sublime faith. It is a sacrifice of humanity, without conditions, on the altar of Godhead; an acceptance of God's will as the law, of God's glory as the end, of the universe: but that will is the expression of infinite rightness, and that glory is the realization of infinite good; the finite is swallowed up in the infinite, but it is not lost — it is irradiated and transfigured.

MacDonald's Scottish heroines are, on the whole, hardly equal to his heroes. Maggie Elginbrod is executed too much on the saint and angel pattern. Very lovely she is, and not without a certain recognisable Scotticism; but she is too good to be strongly interesting. The tranquil approbation with which she beholds the love of another woman for the man to whom she is in her heart devoted, which love is vehemently returned, is not according to the instincts of the female breast. Jeanie Deans could not have loved a fine lady who had won the heart of Reuben Butler. Female weakness and female witchery are closely connected. There is no piquancy, no raciness, no zest, in Maggie's character; her sweetness is saccharine, and cloy. Her father calls her his dove, and the epithet is appropriate; but the fascination of dove-like beauties is not irresistible. Annie Anderson is better. But she also verges on the mawkishly good, and she also is rather too angelically impassive when her lover falls in love with another woman. She is, however, we repeat, more vigorously conceived than Maggie Elginbrod, and her frank confession to Willie, when he asks her to marry him, that she has long loved Alec, is natural and characteristic.

Cosmo Cupples, the learned nondescript, hanging about a Scottish University town, squat, queer, sparingly supplied with cash, and given to strong drink, is a powerful sketch. A drunkard himself, Cosmo is frantically anxious that the young friend who has shown him kindness, and whom he loves, shall escape a drunkard's doom. 'I want no companion in hell to cast his damnation in my teeth.' He is a classical and mathematical scholar, with the metaphysics which are second nature to a Scotch graduate. 'The hypostasis o' her,' he says of the girl he had loved, 'was just perfection itself.' He is ultimately rescued from drink, — never, we fear, from metaphysics.

Ericson, who appears in *Robert Falconer*, one of the latest of the author's performances, is a still more carefully-drawn portrait, and one of far deeper and more pathetic interest. Noble in all tones of mind, generous, tender, aspiring, Ericson cannot lay his

grasp firmly on truth as it is in God and in the God man. He cannot see God through the obscuring clouds of human misery, and his impassioned enthusiasm for the good, the true, and the beautiful, finds no sure centre to which it can cling. As Carlyle says of Lessing, 'he stands before us like a toilworn but unwearied and heroic champion, earning not the conquest, but the battle.' He cannot believe, and he will not pretend that he believes; he will not be driven by mere unmanly terror to force himself to believe; he dies in hope, not in faith. This is, perhaps, the most finished and masterly portrait in the whole range of George MacDonald's works, and it is alone sufficient to prove that he has made great progress since the time when he drew David Elginbrod.

MacDonald himself, as he is revealed in his books, is in all things the reverse of the sceptic. He can sympathize, delicately and deeply sympathize, with doubt, but, for his own part, he seems literally to be destitute of the faculty of dubitation. The universe for him beams and blazes with the light of God. He will not hear of it that evil has a chance in the world of his Father. The central idea of all his thinking is that the universe is but subject-matter for the love of God, a tree to be penetrated with life to its remotest branch, to be thrown out into eternal blossoming of holiness and of joy, a lamp to be filled with Divine radiance. Nay, the universe is but the embodiment of a Divine idea, and that idea is love. 'Let the old heathens,' he exclaims, 'count Darkness the womb of all things. I count Light the older, from the tread of whose feet fell the first shadow — and that was Darkness. Darkness exists but by the light and for the light. But (it is objected) that is all mysticism. Look about you. The dark places of the earth are the habitations of cruelty. Men and women blaspheme God, and die. How can this, then, be an hour for rejoicing? They are (such is the reply) in God's hands. Take from me my rejoicing, and I am powerless to help them. It shall not destroy the whole bright holiday to me, that my father has given my brother a beating. It will do him good. He needed it somehow. He is looking after them.' And as for us men and women, our part is to work together with God; patiently, unweariedly, in gladness and in sorrow; lessening the evil, increasing the good, pushing the triumph of the morning on the borders of the night. Infinite rhythmic activity in well-doing, modulated to the harmonies, to the laws, of the universe; unresting, unabating, in step and tune with the stars, the tides, the seasons; the problems

of speculation to wait; the mystery of evil to be solved by annihilating it; this to be the rule for man. Such is our general impression of MacDonald's scheme of belief derived from his works. His faith may seem to theologians objectionable; it can seem to no man dead.

'Our God is a consuming fire.' How reconcile this with the theory that the universe is all light, or the shadow of light? The words form the text of perhaps the most remarkable sermon in the highly remarkable volume of sermons which MacDonald has published. The 'consuming fire,' he holds, 'is love. But it is not less a fire. Nothing is inexorable but love. . . . For love loves unto purity. Love has ever in view the absolute loveliness of that which it beholds. . . . Therefore all that is not beautiful in the beloved, all that comes between and is not of love's kind, must be destroyed. And our God is a consuming fire. . . . It is the nature of God, so terribly pure that it destroys all that is not pure as fire, which demands like purity in our worship. He will have purity. It is not that the fire will burn us if we do not worship thus; but that the fire will burn us until we worship thus; yea, will go on burning within us after all that is foreign to it has yielded to its force no longer with pain and consuming, but as the highest consciousness of life, the presence of God.' The burning may be very terrible, but it will not cease to be the burning of love. Even in the outer darkness, 'God hath withdrawn Himself, but not lost His hold. . . . His heart has ceased to beat into the man's heart, but He keeps him alive by His fire.' And the burning will go on until impurity is burnt out of every one of God's immortal progeny. The idea of eternal perdition is abhorrent to MacDonald's mind, and he never hesitates to proclaim his faith in ultimate restitution. 'At length, O God, wilt Thou not cast Death and Hell into the lake of Fire — even into thine own consuming self? Death shall then die everlastingly.

"And hell itself will pass away  
And leave her dolorous mansions to the  
peering day."

Then, indeed, wilt Thou be all in all. For then our poor brothers and sisters, every one — O God, we trust in Thee, the Consuming Fire — shall have been burnt clean and brought home. For if their moans, myriads of ages away, would turn heaven for us into hell — shall a man be more merciful than God? Shall, of all His glories,



His mercy alone not be infinite? Shall a brother love a brother more than the Father loves a son?—more than the Brother Christ loves His brother? Would He not die yet again to save one brother more?'

We are not called upon to discuss these opinions from a theological point of view. Mr. MacDonald would not shrink from the admission that he looks beyond the letter of Scripture, and many of our readers will think that all speculation which is wise beyond what is written must be thin and unsubstantial. The simplicity of the Saviour's declarations, reinforcing the decision of conscience that sin is the object of God's wrath and curse, and appointing for the obdurate sinner a future of calamity, will satisfy the majority of devout and reverent minds. If, however, we would apprehend the scheme of thought which, in poem, in novel, and in sermon, George MacDonald consistently carries out, it is necessary for us to have clear conceptions as to its fundamental principles and its leading propositions. A novel in these days may be anything, from a system of theology or philosophy to a nursery tale; and MacDonald does not cease to be a thinker and a moralist when he becomes a novelist.

At first glance, we might call his scheme that of Christian pantheism, with suggestion and modification from Fichte, Novalis, Wordsworth, Maurice. But we are soon admonished that this would be incorrect. We find him specially insisting upon human personality. He pointedly and earnestly maintains that we shall know and converse with our friends in a future state of existence. With his whole heart, he would say with Tennyson—

'Eternal form shall still divide  
Eternal form from all beside.'

But there is something which we can represent to ourselves only as a combination of Christian pantheism and Christian mysticism in his view of the physical universe.

To apply to him words which he uses in describing the state of mind of one of his favourite heroes, 'Nature reveals herself to him full of life, yea of the life of life, namely, of God Himself.' Nature is for him full of symbolism; voices reach him from the depths of blue air, from the great caverns, from the glistening stars. She 'is a power of life, and can speak to the heart and conscience mighty words about God, and Truth, and Love.' This thought is constantly recurring in his works. The universe is for him a vision of God.

Human personality nevertheless he will admit to be a greater thing than nature. It is nearer than nature to God. It may be said, 'so to drink of the sun-rays of God, as to radiate them forth, for very fulness, upon the clouded world.' But with personality enters sin. And though we are not aware that there occurs in any part of George MacDonald's works an express definition of sin, its essential character, as he conceives it, is not difficult to understand. It is the assertion by the human personality of a selfish will, out of harmony with the will of God and the law of the universe, which is love. The Divine Being will never absorb man into His essence; human personality will never be destroyed; but the evil thing, the separating, sectarian, stunting element of selfishness, will sooner or later be purged out. In the immortality of all, MacDonald believes; but he appears to hold with equal decision that the purifying influence—the consuming fire—will continue to operate upon human souls after what we call death; and its operation, both before and after death, may involve unspeakable mental, and we presume also, corporeal anguish. Selfishness in relation to man takes the form of unforgiveness; selfishness in relation to God, takes the form of resistance to the Divine Spirit. So long as these continue, repentance has not taken place, and the consuming fire has not prepared the way for pardon. It is through the incarnation and death of Christ that the love of God saves the world; and as, on the one hand, God meets us in the Man Christ Jesus, so, on the other, it is through humanity that we rise to the conception of Divine holiness. The notion of one morality for man, and another for God, he indignantly rejects. One of those recurrent ideas on which it is habitual for him to insist, is that human compassion cannot possibly exceed Divine compassion, and that, therefore, no sentient being will be doomed to everlasting pain. He never shrinks from maintaining his thesis as it presents itself in an extreme instance. Very characteristic, for example, is his incidental discussion of the case of Judas:—

"'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,'" said the Divine, making excuse for His murderers, not after it was all over, but at the very moment when he was dying by their hands. . . . Lord Christ be thanked for that! That was like Thee! But must we believe that Judas, who repented even to agony, who repented so that his high-prized life, self, soul, became worthless in his eyes, and met with no mercy at his hand,—must we believe that he could

find no mercy in such a God? I think when Judas fled from his hanged and fallen body, he fled to the tender help of Jesus, and found it—I say not how. He was in a more hopeful condition now than during any moment of his past life, for he had never repented before.

I will not and cannot believe, O my Lord, that Thou wouldst not forgive thy enemy, even when he repented, and did thee right. Nor will I believe that thy holy death was powerless to save thy foe—that it could not reach to Judas. Have we not heard of those, Thine own, taught of Thee, who could easily forgive their betrayers in Thy name?

In the *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*, the essential connection between the sin of refusing to forgive and the state of being unforgiven, is dramatically exhibited in the mental history of Catherine Weir. 'If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.' We are prone to imagine that the condition of forgiveness here stated is slight and facile. In a vague, easy way, we all seem ready to forgive those who have offended us; yet it will be found, if we consider well, that about the feeling of unforgiveness the very roots of selfishness cling in the human breast. The rankling grudge, the cherished hate, the secret craving for revenge, the pride that will not quit its hold, the evasion that 'forgives but cannot forget,' the reserve of anger after hands have been joined and lips have smiled, this it is in which the evil in the heart always contrives to entrench itself. Catherine Weir, a proud, keen-spirited, ambitious girl, exquisitely sensitive to disgrace, had been ruined by George Everard. She sinks into consumption. She knows she is dying. She will not forgive him. 'That you have had wrongs,' says her clergyman, 'and bitter wrongs, I do not for a moment doubt. And him who has done you most wrong, you will not forgive.' 'No.' 'No! Not even for the sake of Him who, hanging on the tree, after all the bitterness of blows and whipping, and derision, and rudest gestures and taunts, even when the faintness of death was upon Him, cried to His Father to forgive their cruelty? He asks you to forgive the man who wronged you, and you will not—not even for Him! Oh, Catherine, Catherine!' She will not. She will drink the wine of her revenge, though death find the acrid foam of it on her lip. No words of man avail to bring her to repentance. By an experience of dread and anguish more terrible than any she had previously known, she is at last

vanquished, and dies forgiving. The whole delineation is masterly.

The scene of the book in which this occurs is laid in England, and the characters are all English. It is our impression that Mr. MacDonald is to the full as much at home in the description of English as of Scottish character, scenery, and manners. Rogers, the old man-o'-war's man, is as well conceived and powerfully executed a figure as any in his Scotch novels. 'It 'ud be a shame,' remarks old Rogers to his pastor, after hearing him preach a sermon on trust in God, 'of a man like me not to know all as you said this mornin', sir—leastways, I don't mean able to say it right off as you do, sir; but not to know it, after the Almighty had been at such pains to beat it into my hard head just to trust in Him, and fear nothing and nobody—captain, bosun, devil, sunk rock, or breakers ahead; but just to mind Him and stand by halliard, brace, or wheel, or hang on by the leeward earling for that matter.' There occur particular touches and passages in MacDonald's works, revealing a singularly exact acquaintance with those prejudices, habits, feelings, which constitute the atmosphere of social opinion in England. 'It is a fortunate thing that English society now regards the parson as a gentleman, else he would have little chance of being useful to the upper classes.' This is wonderfully true to the tone of sentiment which, quite artlessly, quite without suspicion that it is not Christian, makes itself felt in English society. It is really a conviction in many an English heart, not consciously or articulately held, but betraying its presence by its fruits, that the Almighty looks upon a nobleman as something different from an ordinary person. Consistency of thought and lucid perception of the tie which binds premise to conclusion are not abounding qualities of mind, else it would form a real difficulty with multitudes in England, that a superior order of clergy, men of university education, and with a *minimum* salary of two thousand a year, were not appointed, at the time when Christianity was first promulgated, to take in hand the respectable portion of society in Palestine, Corinth, and Rome. How could mere Evangelists in threadbare coats, city missionaries and converted mechanics, know the usages of good society, or gain its ear? Here is another of the organic facts which MacDonald's penetrating glance detects in our English system of life:—'Let the gentry disclaim it as they may, mere wealth, derived from whatever source, will sooner

reach their level than poor antiquity, or the rarest refinement of personal worth; although, to be sure, the oldest of them will sooner give to the rich their sons or their daughters to wed, to love if they can, to have children by, than they will yield a jot of their ancestral pre-eminence, or acknowledge any equality in their sons or daughters-in-law.' And the essential cause of all this is 'correctly added. 'The carpenter's Son is to them an old myth, not an everlasting fact. To Mammon alone will they yield a little of their rank—none of it to Christ.' In *Guild Court*, MacDonald enters the region of city life in England, and proves that there also he is at home.

Nothing is more difficult to define, nothing gives occasion to more meaningless talk, than difference of national character. We have known men in England who, if portrayed with literal accuracy, would have presented precisely that combination of slowness, vigilance, thrift, shrewdness, and substantial integrity, which answers to the traditional conception of Scotchmen; and we could, on the other hand, name men born and bred to the north of Tweed, who possessed exactly that directness of speech, frankness of bearing, erect, straightforward habit of thought and action which are held to distinguish the better class of Englishmen from natives of Scotland. We would undertake to find a very close original for Mr. Armstrong, the clergyman, drawn in *Adela Cathcart*, among the preachers of North Britain, but none the less are we prepared to admit that he is a characteristic and admirable rendering of one of the best types of English clergymen.

"I declare to you, Smith," says Armstrong, in words which are more vividly self-descriptive than any we could furnish, "I would rather work in the docks, and leave the *churching* to the softs and dandies; for then I should be able to respect myself as giving work for my bread, instead of drawing so many pounds a year for talking *goody* to old wives and sentimental young ladies;—for over men who are worth anything, such a man has no influence.

But if there be a living God, who is doing all He can to save men, to make them pure and noble and high, humble and loving and true, to make them live the life He cares to live Himself; if He has revealed and is revealing this to men, and needs for His purpose the work of their fellow-men, who have already seen and known this purpose, surely there is no nobler office than that of a parson; for to

him is committed the grand work of letting men see the thoughts of God, and the work of God—in a word, of telling the story of Jesus, so that men shall see how true it is for *now*, how beautiful it is for *ever*; and recognise it as in fact the story of God. Then a clergyman has simply to be more of a man than other men; whereas if he be but a clergyman, he is less of a man than any other man who does honestly the work he has to do, whether he be farm-labourer, shoemaker, or shop-keeper."

Mr. Armstrong's practice is in harmony with this view of his office. But can any one acquainted with the state of things in the rural parishes of England fail to appreciate the felicity or the nice correctness of that description of the Sunday ministrations of average country clergymen, 'talking goody to old wives and sentimental young ladies'? We know a very excellent, that is to say very innocent and kindly curate, who performs the whole duty in a country parish in England, and whose sermons, we are convinced, have no more effect upon men's minds than the ticking of the vestry clock. They go on from Sunday to Sunday, in unexceptionable, monotonous humdrum, without any definable character, good, bad, or indifferent, leaving no trace upon the human memory, and producing a state of intellectual and nervous somnolency which, if the mesmerising influence were continued for an hour, instead of the regulation twenty minutes, would probably bring the congregation into a state of dangerous coma. As a parson of this kind Mr. Armstrong began. The tale of his being awakened up into a man alive and Christian, by the instrumentality of a brave girl, who thenceforward becomes his friend and beloved companion, and in due time his wife, is one of the best, raciest, manliest, and most vitally instructive pieces of writing known to us in recent literature.

Mr. Armstrong has observed that his monotonous moral sermons had no manner of effect upon one of his hearers, Miss Lizzie Payton. He is nettled—as it is natural and salutary for a preacher in such circumstances to be. Having the courage of a true Englishman, he resolves to talk to her on the subject. He will, with mild majesty, rebuke her, and probably make some impression upon her mind—she is a most interesting young person, and well worth the trouble.

"You don't seem to like going to church, Miss Lizzie"—thus commences the spiritual light of the parish. . . . "Confess, now.

"You don't like my sermons." "Do you like them yourself, Mr. Armstrong?" Here was a floorer! Did I like them myself? I really couldn't honestly say I did. I was not greatly interested in them, further than as they were my own, and my best attempts to say something about something I knew nothing about. I was silent. She stood looking at me out of clear grey eyes. "Now you have begun this conversation, Mr. Armstrong, I will go on with it," she said, at length. "It was not of my seeking. I do not think you believe what you say in the pulpit." Not believe what I said! Did I believe what I said, or did I only believe that it was to be believed? The tables were turned with a vengeance. Here was the lay lamb, attacked and about to be worried by the wolf clerical, turning and driving the said wolf to bay. I stood and felt like a convicted criminal before the grey eyes of my judge. And somehow or other I did not hate those clear pools of light. They were very beautiful. But not one word could I find to say for myself. I stood and looked at her, and I fear I began to twitch at my neck-cloth, with a vague instinct that I had better go and hang myself."

He does not hang himself. Then and there he prevails upon Miss Payton to assume a right to be his adviser, and, animated by her to a decisive resolution, cuts himself clear of the coil of falsities in which he has become entangled, leaves the ministry for a period, and returns in due time to be a preacher, not of the goody school, but of the *other* kind. He waits until he can wait no longer; for now a Divine call seems to make both his ears to tingle. 'Thoughts began to burn in me, and words to come unbidden, till sometimes I had almost to restrain myself from rising from the pew where I was seated, ascending the pulpit stairs, and requesting the man who had nothing to say, to walk down, and allow me, who had something to say, to take his place.'

There is a good deal of preaching — we mean actual pulpit discoursing — in George MacDonald's books; and very good preaching it generally is; practical, clear, and Evangelical. From the tendency, already sufficiently indicated, of his speculation to the high-down and the mystical, it might be apprehended that his preachers would fly too high for the business and bosoms of men. But he never forgets that good preaching is a thing calculated for the hearer, as well as expressing the views of the speaker, and that of pulpit luminaries it holds pre-eminently true, to use the image of Swift —

'That stars beyond a certain height  
Give mortals neither heat nor light.'

There is not a more practical sermon in the language, than that upon God and Mammon, in the *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*. It would not startle any Evangelical congregation in the metropolis except by its pertinence, depth, and vivid earnestness. 'In the name of the holy child Jesus,' says the preacher, 'I call upon you, this Christmas Day, to cast care to the winds, and trust in God; to receive the message of peace and good-will to men; to yield yourselves to the Spirit of God, that you may be taught what He wants you to know; to remember that the one gift promised without reserve to those who ask it — the one gift worth having — the gift which makes all other gifts a thousand-fold in value, is the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the child Jesus, who will take of the things of Jesus, and show them to you — make you understand them, that is — so that you shall see them to be true, and love Him with all your heart and soul, and your neighbour as yourselves.' There is not much insistence upon the authority of Scripture, but Biblical similitudes are not infrequent, and the language is often enriched by Biblical phrase. 'If I could get them,' says one of Mr. MacDonald's clergymen, whom we may safely take for himself, 'to like poetry and beautiful things in words, it would not only do them good, but help them to see what is in the Bible, and, therefore, to love it more; for I never could believe that a man who did not find God in other places, as well as in the Bible, ever found Him there at all. And I always thought, that to find God in other books enabled us to see clearly that He was *more* in the Bible than in any other book, or all other books put together.' The supreme revelation of God he finds in Christ. In Him he sees what is 'eternally beyond' abstract truth; 'the ideal in the real, the living truth, not the truth that I can *think*, but the truth that thinks itself, that thinks me, that God has thought, yea, that God is, the truth *being* true to itself and to God and to man — Christ Jesus, my Lord, who knows, and feels, and does the truth. I have seen Him, and I am both content and unsatisfied. For in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.'

The test of value in works of fiction being in our opinion the amount of truth they contain, we are but slightly interested in the question of Mr. MacDonald's success or failure in the construction of his plots. The importance and enduring worth of Thackeray's novels are closely connected with his habit of almost dispensing both with plots and he-

roes. His account of the Newcome family has a strict historical value, as a delineation of domestic life in England, in the early part of the nineteenth century, and our confidence in the verisimilitude of the picture is increased by his contemptuous violation, in the fortunes of Clive and Ethel, of those rules by which the ordinary novelist arranges his births, deaths, and marriages. Life in England, seen through the medium of Thackeray's sad and stern philosophy — this is all that men of sense care to look for in his novels. On like principles we are mainly indifferent to the way in which MacDonald pairs off his ladies and gentlemen, and secures the required amount of winding and eddying, fretting and foaming, in his streams of true love; we reserve our attention for the representation, with comments annexed, which a mind of unquestionable genius, profound religious feeling, extraordinary powers of thought, and unbounded human sympathy, gives of the world in which we live. But whatever importance we may or may not attach to the matter, it must be admitted that George MacDonald is not specially happy or inventive in the construction of his plots. In *David Elginbrod* and *Alec Forbes*, substantially the same outline of story is made use of, and there is nothing in it, to begin with, felicitous enough to entitle it to this distinction. Hugh Sutherland, who, viewed from the novelist's stand-point, plays the part of hero in the former work, becomes acquainted with Margaret Elginbrod, is favourably impressed with her, and makes, in turn, an impression still deeper. Margaret, in fact, loves him. He goes to a different part of the country; is introduced to Euphra Cameron, falls violently in love with her; has the mortification to find that one Count Halkar, of the sublime scamp species, was before him in enslaving the lady's affections; witnesses her demise; and then, harking back upon the milder affection of other years, proposes to Margaret, and is accepted. Alec Forbes, who is both really and ostensibly the hero of the novel called after him, is a school-fellow of Annie Anderson's, likes her well but with no particular depth of affection, is passionately loved by her in turn, leaves the district, sees Katie Fraser, loves her to distraction, is cut out by a handsome scoundrel, clad, not this time as a foreign count but as a Highland chieftain, weeps over the sudden death of Miss Fraser, and, after calming his nerves by a cold bath, in the form of a trip to the Arctic regions, settles into mild connubial felicity with Annie. This is repetition without even disguise. In cases where there is less of the appearance of a

plot, Mr. MacDonald's success is greater. The thread of narrative on which the tales which make up the bulk of the novel of *Adela Cathcart* are hung, is light and graceful; and a background of connected incident, bearing upon the personal history of the clergyman, in the *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*, pleasantly relieves the serious business which is transacted in the foreground of the picture.

There is in the genius of MacDonald a strong affinity for the marvellous. In the Highlands of Scotland, though the very mists of the mountains seem now to be rent and dissipated by material civilization advancing with its steam-engines and its railway-trains, you may still occasionally meet with that mood of mind, characteristic of a peculiar stage of intellectual development, in which superstitions, once terrible, continue to be half believed, and to furnish an element of picturesqueness and poetry to the thinking and feeling of the people. Goethe was in time to catch the last gleams of this popular poetry of the wonderful, as they faded from the old forests of Germany. The Erlking, with his streaming hair, which is already found to have a suspicious resemblance to the mist of evening, and his daughters, who are half surmised to be only the grey willows shivering in the dusk, is a perfect example of the legendary figure, which once oppressed the soul with awe, but is now becoming picturesque and poetical. To make the Erlking adequately terrific, even for poetical purposes, Scott recommends that Goethe's poems should be read by the light of a candle long in the wick and in a solitary room, about midnight. There are still Highlanders who believe in witchcraft, and second-sight, and the wheeling and marshalling of ghostly armies on the moors, when their tarns glimmer white in the moon. These things were probably real enough to MacDonald in his childhood, and it is an advantage for him, as an artist, to have known as a fact, perhaps to have experienced as a feeling, those emotions of half-painful, half-pleasurable dread which he depicts in his works. It is, we suppose, slight praise to say of his *Portent*, a *Story of the Second Sight*, that it is the finest piece of literary art ever founded upon the superstition it embodies. In its way, it is a masterpiece. The execution is equal to that of anything we have from the hand of MacDonald, if not superior. In language at once nervous and splendid, with rapid, firm, decisive strokes, never loitering in sentimental digression, never intruding philosophy, never overdoing description, he tells his weird and awful tale. His pen is at once pencil and paint-brush; for we behold



every scene and every figure in trenchant outline; and yet we see the whole, as through the rich brooding colours of a sultry and gorgeous sunset. That too-muchness, which the keen censor has not unfrequently to rebuke in his other writings — that accumulation of rhetorical and poetical effect, until the imagination of the reader is wearied — cannot be complained of here. The sketches of hill scenery, though brief, are instinct with power, and are brought, by subtle imaginative touches, into harmony with the general impression of the piece. The 'great mountain,' for example, of which we afterwards hear so much, is at once thrown into the sphere of our intellectual vision, and invested with the appropriate atmosphere of wonder and awe, in the few following words: —

'It was a mighty thing, a chieftain of the race, seamed and scarred, featured with chasms and precipices and overleaning rocks, themselves huge as hills; here blackened with shade, there overspread with glory; interlaced with the silvery lines of falling streams, which, hurrying from heaven to earth, cared not how they went, so it were downwards. Fearful stories were told of the gulfs, sullen waters, and dizzy heights, upon that terror-haunted mountain. In storms, the wind roared like thunder in its caverns and along the jagged sides of its cliffs, but at other times that uplifted land — uplifted, yet secret and full of dismay — lay silent as a cloud on the horizon.'

In the conduct of the tale, the supernatural element is managed with consummate skill. There is exactly enough of it; too much were as fatal to success as too little. When a modern writer introduces the supernatural frankly as such, he at once loses his hold upon the reader's sense of the wonderful. The whole is felt to be mere imaginative play. This is the secret of Scott's failure with the *White Lady of Avenel*. She is not connected in any way with reality; and the wonders she performs — the resuscitation of Sir Piercie Shafton, for instance — strike the mind as nonsensical. Had Scott connected the lady and her performances with natural sights and sounds — mysterious gleamings of light in the gorge of the glen, strange echoes from the hollows of the rocks — and brought out his quasi-supernatural effects by the action of these on the excited imagination of Halbert Glendinning, the whole conception would have attained a higher character. Mr. Matthew Arnold's *Forsaken Merman* appears to me, for the same reason, to be on the wrong side of that chasm which, though very deep, separates but by a step the sub-

lime from the absurd. In MacDonald's tale, that deep chord in our human nature which responds to the wonderful, is kept in strong and sustained vibration; and yet we are never fairly out of the world of fact. Between the associations of a Highland childhood, the impressions of a dream-haunted youth, the experiences of an adventurous, passionate, and strangely circumstanced manhood, and the mysterious phenomena of somnambulism and complete or partial insanity, there is no lack of materials wherewith to construct a scientific theory of the dread and demon-like agencies which torment Duncan Campbell and Lady Alice. It is in this subtle blending of the real and the imaginary, the natural and the preternatural, that the secret of success in dealing with the wonderful lies for modern writers. The reader of *Jane Eyre* is mystified, almost appalled, by the apparition of the spectral woman at the bedside of the girl; but this is nothing to the shudder of thrilling horror which passes over him, when he learns that she was no spectre, but an actual living thing, which might have throttled the little governess.

It adds, perhaps, to the fascination of *The Portent*, that it is not didactic. This can by no means be said of *Phantastes*, a *Faerie Romance*. It is didactic from beginning to end. Nor can we affirm that it is free from the fault of too-muchness previously referred to. The tired imagination droops her wing and shades her eye in the bewildering complication of its wonders, the dazzling blaze of its splendour. Palaces shining like silver, galleries of precious stones, marble, porphyry, jasper, agate, ranged in melody of successive colours, demon shadows, demon trees, magical fountains, magical mirrors, radiant maidens who beam into life from alabaster through the gradual resurrection of music, marble statues in glimmering halls gifted with the power of leaving their pedestals at pleasure and disporting themselves on the light fantastic toe, relapsing into the serenity and silence of stone at a moment's notice, enchantments, forests, preternatural oceans, knights, giants, monsters, grottoes, deadly combats, victories, defeats, ghosts, fairies, dwarfs, ghouls, spectre-wolves, grisly phantoms, amaze, confound, and overwhelm the reader. Such a book would be a rare boon to a German professor of metaphysico-literary criticism. He might puzzle over its meaning for fifteen years, and find that at the end its deeper significance was only beginning to dawn upon his moral consciousness. Happily the main drift of its teach-

ing is discernible without effort. That selfishness is the bane of moral worth, and essentially at variance with the nature of love; that action is better than speculation; that conceit and vanity are weaker than humility; that presumption heralds failure; that a noble death is better than a degraded life — these are a few of its main positions. No one can read it without being astonished at the power and luxuriance of Mr. MacDonald's imagination. The tone is perhaps too uniform, and there is a lack of sprightliness and humour. In such performances, the element of humour should be very prevailing. The pages ought to sparkle with fun. There are some traces of mild satire, but only a few. 'In a wood in fairyland, I found myself listening attentively, and as if it were no unusual thing with me, to a conversation between two squirrels or monkeys. The subjects were not very interesting, except as associated with the individual life and necessities of the little creatures: where the best nuts were to be found in the neighbourhood, and who could crack them best, or who had most laid up for the winter, and such like; only they never said where the store was. There was no great difference in kind between their talk and our ordinary human conversation.' Very mild satire this, like aerated water with a faint suspicion of raspberry vinegar. Better is the account of the creatures who, when they saw a little girl seeking for wings, absolutely insisted upon throwing her down and walking over her. They were of blocks of wood, roughly hewn into the semblance of men; there were head, body, legs and arms, but nothing which you could say quite corresponded to 'the human face divine.' When one of them rushed at and attacked the little girl, the knight struck at him and cut off a leg; but the separated portions hobbled to each other and got along pretty much as before. So the knight clove the whole affair in twain. It was of no use. The thing 'could not be convinced that its vocation was not to walk over people.' No sooner did the little girl address herself to the task of procuring wings, than 'all three parts came bustling up, and if I had not interposed my weight between her and them, she would have been trampled again under them. What was to be done? Suddenly the right plan occurred to me. I tripped one of them up, and taking him by the legs, set him up on his head, with his heels against a tree. I was delighted to find he could not move. Whenever one appeared, I followed the same plan — tripped him up and set on his

head.' Who or what are these singular monsters? Of the critic species, we surmise; human in rough outline, but without features, and composed of wood; prone, by irreversible bent of nature, to walk over any gentle child of beauty that looks for wings, that dares to soar; incapable of perceiving when they are logically cut down or cut up, and as active in their vocation when obviously in a state of logical dismemberment as before; reducible to silence only by a right adjustment of the centre of gravity, and a planting of the skull, naturally ballasted with lead, upon the kind breast of mother earth. This is really an exhilarating contribution to the natural history of the critic species. There is too little of the like in the works of Mr. MacDonald.

Few living writers can compare with him in what is now one of the most highly-prized and carefully-cultivated capacities of the literary or pictorial artist — landscape painting. His descriptive talent, enriched with poetic sympathy, and ever alive to the symbolism of nature, ranges with marvellous power and comprehensiveness over the phenomena of the visible universe, drawing forth varied tones of its orchestral music. His touch is now grand in its strength, now exquisite in its delicacy. From the glory of noontide, when every cloud has glided away and the temple of immensity is filled with God only, to the play of leaf shadows, in half-light of tender green, on tree trunk or weathered wall, — from the implacable ocean, scowling beneath black thunderclouds like a dark eye beneath shaggy brows, to the sleeping well in the depths of the summer wood, — from the death-like peace of snow in winter to the rosy gleam of summer gardens, the golden glow of harvest fields, — no appearance of nature has escaped him. Where there is so much to choose from, we have difficulty in selecting what will do justice to Mr. MacDonald. Here are a few sentences, thrown off in gay, sketchy manner, in which not a few touches will, we think, remind readers of Jean Paul: —

'The season went on, and the world, like a great flower afloat in space, kept opening its thousand-fold blossom. Hail and sleet were things lost in the distance of the year — storming away in some far-off region of the north, unknown to the summer generation. The butterflies, with wings looking as if all the flower-painters of fairy-land had wiped their brushes upon them in freakish yet artistic sport, came forth in the freedom of their wills and the faithful ignorance of their minds. The birds, the

poets of the animal creation — what, though they never get beyond the lyrical! — awoke to utter their own joy, and awake like joy in others of God's children. The birds grew silent, because their history laid hold upon them, compelling them to turn their words into deeds, and keep eggs warm, and hatch for worms. The butterflies died of old age and delight. The green life of the earth rushed up in corn, to be ready for the time of need. The corn grew ripe, and therefore, weary, hung its head, died, and was laid aside for a life beyond its own.

More expressly pictorial, and vividly truthful in its rendering of one of nature's grander facts, is this description of aurora borealis on a clear, frosty night in Scotland: —

'It was a still, lovely night, clear and frosty, with — yes, there were — millions of stars overhead. Away in the north, the streamers were shooting hither and thither, with marvellous evanescence and regeneration. No dance of goblins could be more lawless in its grotesqueness than this dance of the northern lights in their ethereal beauty, shining, with a wild ghostly changefulness and feebleness, all colours at once; now here, now there, like a row of slender organ-pipes, rolling out and in and along the sky. Or they might have been the chords of some gigantic stringed instrument, which chords became visible only when mighty hauds of music struck their keys and set them vibrating; so that, as the hands swept up and down the Titanic key-board, the chords themselves seemed to roll along the heavens, though, in truth, some vanished here and others appeared yonder. Up and down they darted, and away and back — and always in the direction he did not expect them to take. He thought he heard them crackle, and he stood still to listen; but he could not be sure that it was not the snow sinking and *crisping* beneath his feet. All around him was still as a world too long frozen: in the heavens alone was there motion. There this entrancing dance of colour and shape went on, wide beneath, and tapering up to the zenith! Truly there was revelry in heaven! One might have thought that a prodigal son had just got home, and that the music and the dancing had begun, of which only the far-off rhythmic shine could reach the human sense; for a dance in heaven might well show itself in colour to the eyes of men.'

And what a feeling of the moods of the sea is there in these sentences, which we find scattered over a page or two and put together!

'Clouds hung above the sea; and above the clouds two or three disconsolate stars. They (Alec and Katie) climbed the steep, rugged steps, and stood on the broad wall, hearing the

sea-pulses lazily fall at its foot. The wave crept away after it fell, and returned to fall again like a weary hound. There was hardly any life in the sea. How mournful it was to lie out there, the wintry night, beneath an all but starless heaven, with the wind vexing it when it wanted to sleep! The wind kept coming in gusts, tearing a white gleam now and then on the dark surface of the sea. Up the slope the waves rushed, and down the slope they sank again, with that seemingly aimless and resultless rise and fall, which makes the sea so dreary and sad to those men and women who are not satisfied without some goal in view, some outcome of their labours; for it goes on and on, answering ever to the call of sun and moon, and the fierce trumpet of the winds, yet working nothing but the hopeless wear of the bosom in which it lies bound for ever.'

Very characteristic is this little visionary picture of lovers in the moonlight: —

'It was all moon — the air with the moon-core in it; the trees confused into each other by the sleep of her light; the bits of water, so many moons over again; the flowers, all pale phantoms of flowers: the whole earth, transfused with reflex light, was changed into a moon-ghost of its former self. They were walking in the moonworld.'

Perhaps, on the whole, there is a little too much of moonlight and of dreamlight in Mr. MacDonald's works. His landscape is occasionally deficient in that distinctness and force — in one word, that articulateness — which is so remarkable in the scenes of Scott; which makes us feel that we could lay down in a map the massive promontory on which hung the wood of Warroch, and the very rock at the foot of which, as Dirk Hatteraick's vessel crowded sail round the headland, the battered corpse of Kennedy fell. But we ought to respect the idiosyncrasy of genius, and there can be no doubt that the dreamy and aerial medium in which MacDonald's delineations appear at times to float is connected essentially with his greatest gifts. If his landscapes seem occasionally to swim and waver before the eye rather than to remain fixed in definite, well-arranged breadths of light and shade, we are fain to admit that the prevalence of the subjective in his habit of thought — his thorough domiciliation in the world of ideas and abstractions and spiritual things — to which this vagueness may be due, gives him a singular power of describing mental realities and the interplay of thought and feeling. The bodiless creatures of the brain glow into visibility under his touch; he can depict every mood, and

humour, and capricious change in the soul's atmosphere; and his skill in making the most delicate shade of thought perceptible might be contemplated by metaphysicians with admiring despair. But he requires careful reading. To a hasty glance, the most elaborate reasonings of his *Unspoken Sermons* may seem obscure and cloud-like; 'pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream'; the gorgeous sweep of the vestments of Truth as she passes by rather than the very lineaments of her face. But if you look long enough and carefully enough, you will find that MacDonald's most fine and evanescent touches have a meaning, and that the thought, though difficult to grasp, is there.

His fame as a prose writer has thrown partially into the shade his claims to distinction as a poet, and we are not prepared to maintain that his genius is so essentially poetical as to render it advisable on his part to relinquish prose. But the laurel already round his brows must, we think, prove imperishable. There is hardly, of its kind, in the language, a more beautiful poem than his *Mother-child*. It has the truthfulness of Cowper, with more than Cowper's tenderness of sentiment; it has the homeliness of a lyrical ballad by Wordsworth, without that studied flatness to which Wordsworth, in the perverseness of his theory, condemned himself while composing his lyrical ballads. Tennyson's *Dora* belongs to the same class, but it is still finer, being, without exception, the loveliest pastoral in the English language. MacDonald's poem, however, will stand comparison with anything except the very best work of Tennyson. The figure of the child-mother, true as a photograph to English life, and yet with tender, idealising lights playing round her and lifting her into the region of art, rises before us in homely beauty, and is at once accepted into that sacred chamber of the mind, where memory guards those forms on which the heart delights to dwell. The solitudes, mishaps, alarms of the nurse of nine, as she carries her baby brother, 'almost as big as she,' are narrated with a graceful, smiling, earnest gaiety — with a sincere and happy sympathy — with an aroma, faintly perceptible, of the kindest humour — which lend a singular fascination to the piece. Here is a true heroine, real-ideal, in the blue frock of a little English girl; and such heroism is to be found among the poor — perhaps more, though this is a sad thought, among the young poor than the old. There is a pathos undefinable — something between a smile and a tear — in the account of the proceed-

ings of the child-mother when she returns home after her misfortunes, and her deliverance.

'At home at last, lo! scarce a speck  
Was on the child from foot to neck,  
But she was sorely mired;  
Nor gave she proof of grief's unrest,  
Till, hid upon her mother's breast,  
She wept till she was tired.  
And, intermixed with sobbing wail,  
She told her mother all the tale.  
"But," — here her wet cheeks glow —  
"Mother, I did not, through it all,  
I never once let baby fall,  
I never let him go."

Others of Mr. MacDonald's earlier poems were distinguished by a profound thoughtfulness, a peculiar but beautiful vein of sentiment and a linguistic power, which might be regarded as sure prognostics of the rise of a new-star on the horizon of letters. In the *Hidden Life*, the effect of one great emotional experience in modifying the character and in determining the course of life, is delineated with a beautiful tenderness of sympathy, and the softest glow of quiet colour. The subject was unpromising, and it was probably impossible to handle it so as to produce a popular poem, but the piece will long continue to afford delight to gentle and reflective minds, and is a thoroughly characteristic performance of the author. Its one incident is the meeting of the hero and a beautiful woman. Her loveliness stamped itself upon heart and brain, and that one gleam of radiant beauty became to him his destiny.

'I cannot tell  
In words the tenderness that glowed across  
His bosom — burned it clean in word and  
thought.'

He died early, and when he found himself dying, he wrote a letter to the lady, who occupied a different station in life from his, and whom he had never seen a second time, telling her what an influence she had exerted upon his life. Pensive resignation and serene sadness, smiling sometimes, laughing never — this is the spirit of the work.

'God, give us heaven. Remember our poor  
hearts.  
We never grasp the zenith of the time;  
We find no spring, except in winter prayers.'

Another remarkable poem of Mr. MacDonald's early time is a *Dream within a Dream*. Little as the title is adapted to suggest the fact, the descriptions are sternly

realistic. Here is a picture of a town on a wet morning in the Black Country, and of two operatives, a man and a woman, going to their work, which seems to us marked by great and various power : —

'It was a drizzly morning where I stood.

The cloud had sunk, and filled with fold on fold

The chimneyed city; so the smoke rose not,  
But spread diluted in the cloud, and fell  
A black precipitate on miry streets,  
Where dim grey faces vision-like went by,  
But half awake, half satisfied with sleep.  
Slave-engines had begun their ceaseless growl  
Of labour. Iron bands and huge stone blocks  
That held them to their task, strained, shook,  
until

The city trembled. Those pale-visaged forms  
Were hastening on to feed their groaning  
strength

With labour to the full.

Look! there they come,  
Poor amid poverty; she with her gown  
Drawn over her meek head; he trying much,  
But fruitless half to shield her from the rain.  
They enter the wide gates, amid the jar,  
And clash and thunder of the awful force  
That, conquering force, still vibrates on as if  
With an excess of power, hungry for work.  
With differing strength to different tasks they  
part,

To be the soul of knowledge unto strength;  
For man has eked his body out with wheels,  
And cranks, and belts, and levers, pinions,  
screws, —

One body all, pervaded still with life  
From man the maker's will. Mid keen-eyed  
men,

Thin-featured and exact, his part is found;  
Hers where the dusk air shines with lustrous  
eyes.

And there they laboured through the  
murky day,  
Whose air was livid mist, their only breath,  
Foul floating dust of swift revolving wheels  
And feathery spoil of fast convorted threads  
Making a sultry chaos in the sun.'

For stern truth of painting this will rank with the best work of Crabbe, and Crabbe never reached its level in thought. Indeed we know no poetry in which the oppressive and stifling influence of mechanism, when it is a mere brute force,

A horror, as of power without a soul,  
Dark, undefined, and mighty unto ill,

is so deeply realized as in that of MacDonald. Scattered here and there throughout the volumes, you meet with deep and beautiful thoughts.

'Better than thrill a listening crowd,  
Sit at a wise man's feet;

But better teach a child, than toil  
To make thyself complete.'

This raises us into a loftier atmosphere than Goethe's most elaborate exaltation of his ideal of self-culture. And could there be a kindlier, or finer, or truer glance into the philosophy of mob-revolutions than this : —

'Wild waves, ruled by wilder winds,  
Which call themselves the free?'

*Within and Without*, which ought to have been called *Count Julian*, — Mr. MacDonald, by the way, is singularly unfortunate in his titles, — is a dramatic poem. It was one of his earliest efforts, and he evidently took great pains with it; but it is defective. We tire, dreadfully, of the Count; and the proportion of incident to talk is too small. The child, Lily, is, however, an exquisitely beautiful delineation; and when Julian and she die, and Lilia, the wife and mother, remains behind, the thought of their presence as spirits, who wait upon her, and make her half-sensible that they are near her, is worked out with delicate felicity : —

'LILIA. "Oh! are they dead? Is it possible?  
I feel

As if they were so near me! Speak  
again,

Sweet voices! comfort me; I need  
it, dear ones!"

JULIAN (sings). "Come away! above the storm  
Ever shines the blue;  
Come away! beyond the form  
Ever lies the true."

LILY (sings). "Mother, darling, do not weep;  
All I cannot tell:  
By and by you'll go to sleep,  
And you'll wake so well."

Of the volume of poems with which Mr. MacDonald has presented the world this Christmas season, we cannot speak in terms of unqualified commendation. They appear to us — if we must confess it — to prove that his genius has taken the bent of prose. At all events, the power displayed in *Alec Forbes* and *Robert Falconer* is very much higher than the average power of these pieces. They do not appear to us to have concentrated in them the whole energy of the author's mind; and his reputation as a poet must still rest mainly upon his earlier works. He will have to recollect that Apollo, as Mr. Matthew Arnold sings, though young, is 'intolerably severe.' It is in the travail of the soul — a travail which is a mysterious, indefinable mingling of agony and joy — that the perfect poem



is born. There are beautiful tones and touches in this volume; but the pieces partake too much, on the whole, of the character of occasional verses. Mr. MacDonald's popularity is a snare to him. When a man knows that every thought or fancy which he chooses to throw into rhyme become forthwith convertible into cash, he is apt to forget the intolerable severity of Apollo. Syrens, in the singular modern form of publishers waving you on with batfals of money, are as hostile as the old Syrens to the melodious Nine. Byron spoke with a kind of ironical regret of his being looked upon by his publisher in the light of a pack-horse, or ass, or 'any thing that is his.' If Mr. MacDonald intends the highest flights of poetry, he must brace himself to sterner effort than this new volume reveals. Here are some fine stanzas from it, on the Summer Night:—

'What art thou, gathering dusky, cool,  
In slow gradation fine?  
Death's lovely shadow, flickering full  
Of eyes about to shine?

'The weary day gone down below,  
Thou leanest o'er his grave,  
Revolving all the vanish'd show  
The gracious splendour gave.

'Thou art the woman, I will say,  
Dark-browed with luminous eyes,  
Of whom is born the mighty Day,  
That fights, and saves, and dies.

'For action sleeps with sleeping light,  
Calm thought awakes with thee:  
Each soul becomes a summer night,  
With stars that shine and see.'

On the whole, the tendency of these books, prose and poetical, is sound and healthful. You may call them, with considerate emphasis, good books. They are pervaded by a spirit of faith and joy; the author rejoices always; he seems to have an angelic incapacity of being unhappy. He looks over the world as through the eye-lids of the morning, and finds it very beautiful and very good. He has an unlimited capacity of hoping and loving, a limited capacity of hating. He does, grandly and rightly, detest Sterne. He flings him out. Lie there, thou maudlin hypocrite; thou profane and false and unclean thing; lie there on the dunghill of the world! But we do not remember that there is more than a genial heat in his hatred for other person or thing. He believes in God and in man, and will not have it that they are so wide apart as some theologians would make it appear. He believes

in goodness, in virtue, and that of the right sort, masculine yet gentle, pure yet strong; Christian virtue, not pagan; the centre of his ethical system is love for God and love for man; the centre of his actual universe is the God-man. But, in particular, the genial, sunny, rejoicing spirit of these books is healthful and beneficial at a time when weariness and disappointment and brooding pain cast strange shadows over the noblest minds. There is a cry as of despair in much of our literature; a cry which is loud and bitter in the latest works of Ruskin and Carlyle. With our much cultivation we have overlaid the simple, original instincts of our nature; we want better bread than is baked with wheat, better proof of God, freedom, immortality than exists in the very structure of our nature, and in the first flash of the universe, illuminated as it is with Deity, upon our eyes. A child-like, believing, rejoicing, yet brave and powerful nature like MacDonald's is in days like these, a very precious boon of Heaven.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

## LADY MACBETH.

BY FANNY KEMBLE.

IN a momentary absence of memory, a friend of mine once suggested to me the idea that Lady Macbeth's exclamation in the sleeping scene—"The Thane of Fife had a wife; where is she now?"—was a conscience-stricken reference to herself, and her own lost condition. Of course, the hypothesis was immediately abandoned on the recollection that Macbeth never had been Thane of Fife, and that it is Macduff's slaughtered mate Lady Macbeth is dreaming of,—the poor dame who, with all her pretty chickens, was destroyed at one fell swoop by Macbeth's murderous cruelty.

The conversation that ensued led me to reflect on this mistaken suggestion of my friend, as involving a much deeper mistake—an important psychological error. Not only the fact was not as suggested, but a fact of that nature—viz. an accusing return upon herself by Lady Macbeth—could not be. Lady Macbeth, even in her sleep, has no qualms of conscience; her remorse takes none of the tenderer forms akin to repentance, nor the weaker ones allied to fear, from the pursuit of which the tortured soul, seeking where to hide itself, not seldom

escapes into the boundless wilderness of madness.

A very able article, published some years ago in the *National Review*, on the character of Lady Macbeth, insists much upon an opinion that she died of remorse, as some palliation of her crimes, and mitigation of our detestation of them. That she died of *wickedness* would be, I think, a juster verdict. Remorse is consciousness of guilt, — often, indeed, no more akin to saving contrition than the faith of devils, who tremble and believe, is to saving faith, — but still consciousness of guilt: and that I think Lady Macbeth never had; though the *unrecognised* pressure of her great guilt killed her. I think her life was destroyed by sin as by a disease of which she was unconscious, and that she died of a broken heart, while the impenetrable resolution of her will remained unbowed. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak; the body can sin but so much, and survive; and other deadly passions besides those of violence and sensuality can wear away its fine tissues, and undermine its wonderful fabric. The woman's mortal frame succumbed to the tremendous weight of sin and suffering which her immortal soul had power to sustain; and, having destroyed its temporal house of earthly sojourn, that soul, unexhausted by its wickedness, went forth into its new abode of eternity.

The nature of Lady Macbeth, even when prostrated in sleep before the Supreme Avenger whom she keeps at bay during her conscious hours by the exercise of her indomitable will and resolute power of purpose, is incapable of any salutary spasm of moral anguish, or hopeful paroxysm of mental horror. The irreparable is still to her the *undeploable* — "What's done cannot be undone:" — and her slumbering eyes see no more ghosts than her watchful waking ones believe in: "I tell you yet again, Banquo is buried; he cannot come out of his grave." Never, even in her dreams, does any gracious sorrow smite from her stony heart the blessed brine of tears that wash away sin; never, even in her dreams, do the avenging furies lash her through purgatorial flames that burn away guilt; and the dreary but undismayed desolation in which her spirit abides for ever is quite other than that darkness, however deep, which the soul acknowledges, and whence it may yet behold the breaking of a dawn shining far off from round the mercy-seat.

The nightmare of a butcher (could a butcher deserve to be so visited for the unhappy necessity of his calling) is more akin to the hauntings which beset the woman

who has strangled conscience and all her brood of pleading angels, and deliberately armed her heart and mind against all those suggestions of beauty or fear which succour the vacillating sense of right in the human soul with promptings less imperative than those of conscience, but of fine subtle power sometimes to supplement her law. Justly is she haunted by "blood," who in the hour of her atrocities exclaims to her partner, when his appalled imagination reddens the whole ocean with the bloody hand he seeks to cleanse, "A little water clears us of this deed!" Therefore blood — the feeling of blood, the sight of blood, the smell of blood — is the one ignoble hideous retribution which has dominion over her. Intruding a moral element of which she is conscious into Lady Macbeth's punishment is a capital error, because her punishment, in its very essence, consists in her infinite distance from all such influences. Macbeth, to the very end, may weep, and wring his hands, and tear his hair, and gnash his teeth, and bewail the lost estate of his soul, though with him too the dreadful process is one of gradual induration. For he retains the unutterable consciousness of a soul; he has a perception of having sinned, of being fallen, of having wandered, of being lost; and so he cries to his physician for a remedy for that "wounded spirit," heavier to bear than all other conceivable sorrow; and utters, in words bitterer than death, the doom of his own deserted, despised, dreaded, and detested old age. He may be visited to the end by those noble pangs which bear witness to the pre-eminent nobility of the nature he has desecrated, and suggest a reascension, even from the bottom of that dread abyss into which he has fallen, but from the depths of which he yet beholds the everlasting light which gives him consciousness of its darkness. But *she* may none of this: she may but feel, and see, and smell blood; and wonder at the unquenched stream that she still wades in — "Who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" — and fly, hunted through the nights by that "knocking at the door" which beats the wearied life at last out of her stony heart and seared impenetrable brain.

I once read a pamphlet that made a very strong impression upon me, on the subject of the possible annihilation of the human soul as the consequence of sin. The author, supposing goodness to be nearness to God, and this to be the cause of vitality in the soul, suggested the idea of a gradual voluntary departure from God, which should

cause the gradual darkening and final utter extinction of the spirit. I confess that this theory of spiritual self-extinction through sin seemed to me a thousand times more appalling than the most terrific vision of everlasting torment.

Taking the view I do of Lady Macbeth's character, I cannot accept the idea (held, I believe, by her great representative, Mrs. Siddons) that in the banquet scene the ghost of Banquo, which appears to Macbeth, is seen at the same time by his wife, but that, in consequence of her greater command over herself, she not only exhibits no sign of perceiving the apparition, but can, with its hideous form and gesture within a few feet of her, rail at Macbeth in that language of scathing irony which, combined with his own terror, elicits from him the incoherent and yet too dangerously significant appeals with which he agonizes her and amazes the court.

To this supposition I must again object that Lady Macbeth is no ghost-seer. She is not of the temperament that admits of such impressions; she is incapable of supernatural terror in proportion as she is incapable of spiritual influences; devils do not visibly tempt, nor angels visibly minister to her; and, moreover, I hold that, as to have seen Banquo's ghost at the banquet-table would have been contrary to *her* nature, to have done so and persisted in her fierce mocking of her husband's terror, would have been impossible to human nature. The hypothesis makes Lady Macbeth a monster, and there is no such thing in all Shakespeare's plays. That she is godless, and ruthless in the pursuit of the objects of her ambition, does not make her such. Many men have been so; and she is that unusual and unamiable (but not altogether unnatural) creature, a masculine woman, in the only real significance of that much misapplied epithet.

Lady Macbeth was this: she possessed the qualities which generally characterise men, and not women — energy, decision, daring, unscrupulousness; a deficiency of imagination, a great preponderance of the positive and practical mental elements; a powerful and rapid appreciation of what each exigency of circumstance demanded, and the coolness and resolution necessary for its immediate execution. Lady Macbeth's character has more of the essentially manly nature in it than that of Macbeth. The absence of imagination, together with a certain obtuseness of the nervous system, is the condition that goes to produce that rare quality — physical courage — which she

possesses in a pre-eminent degree. This combination of deficiencies is seldom found in men, infinitely seldomer in women; and its invariable result is insensibility to many things — among others, insensibility to danger. Lady Macbeth was not so bloody as her husband, for she was by no means equally liable to fear; she would not have hesitated a moment to commit any crime that she considered necessary for her purposes, but she would always have known what were and what were not necessary crimes. We find it difficult to imagine that, if *she* had undertaken the murder of Banquo and Fleance, the latter would have been allowed to escape, and impossible to conceive that she would have ordered the useless and impolitic slaughter of Macduff's family and followers, after he had fled to England, from a mere rabid movement of impotent hatred and apprehension. She was never made savage by remorse, or cruel by terror.

There is nothing that seems to me more false than the common estimate of cruelty, as connected with the details of crime. Could the annals and statistics of murder be made to show the prevailing temper under which the most atrocious crimes have been committed, there is little doubt that those which present the most revolting circumstances of cruelty would be found to have been perpetrated by men of more, rather than less, nervous sensibility, or irritability, than the average; for it is precisely in such organizations that hatred, horror, fear, remorse, dismay, and a certain blind bloodthirsty rage, combine under evil excitement to produce that species of delirium under the influence of which, as of some infernal ecstasy, the most horrible atrocities are perpetrated.

Lady Macbeth was of far too powerful an organization to be liable to the frenzy of mingled emotions by which her wretched husband is assailed; and when, in the very first hour of her miserable exaltation, she perceives that the ashes of the Dead Sea are to be henceforth her daily bread, when the crown is placed upon her brow, and she feels that the "golden round" is lined with red-hot iron, she accepts the dismal truth with one glance of steady recognition: —

"Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Beholding all her own mischance,  
Mute — with a glassy countenance."

She looks down the dreary vista of the coming years, and, having admitted that "naught's had, all's spent," dismisses her

fate, without further comment, from consideration, and applies herself forthwith to encourage, cheer, and succour, with the support of her superior strength, the finer yet feebler spirit of her husband.

In denying to Lady Macbeth all the peculiar sensibilities of her sex (for they are all included in its pre-eminent characteristic — the maternal instinct — and there is no doubt that the illustration of the quality of her resolution by the assertion that she would have dashed her baby's brains out, if she had sworn to do it, is no mere figure of speech, but very certain earnest) Shakespeare has not divested her of natural feeling to the degree of placing her without the pale of our common humanity. Her husband shrank from the idea of her bearing *women* like herself, but not "males," of whom he thought her a fit mother; and she retains enough of the nature of mankind, if not of womankind, to bring her within the circle of our toleration, and make us accept her as *possible*. Thus the solitary positive instance of her sensibility has nothing especially feminine about it. Her momentary relenting in the act of stabbing Duncan, because he resembled her father as he slept, is a touch of human tenderness by which most men might be overcome, while the smearing her hands in the warm gore of the slaughtered old man is an act of physical insensibility which not one woman out of a thousand would have had nerve or stomach for.

That Shakespeare never imagined Banquo's ghost to be visible to Lady Macbeth in the banquet-hall seems to me abundantly proved (however inferentially) by the mode in which he has represented such apparitions as affecting all the men who in his dramas are subjected to this supreme test of courage, — good men, whose minds are undisturbed by remorse; brave men, soldiers, prepared to face danger in every shape ("but that") in which they may be called upon to meet it. For instance, take the demeanour of Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo, throughout the scene so finely expressive of their terror and dismay at the appearance of the ghost, and in which the climax is their precipitating themselves together towards the object of their horror, striking at it with their partisans; a wonderful representation of the effect of fear upon creatures of a naturally courageous constitution, which Shakespeare has reproduced in the ecstasy of terror with which Macbeth himself finally rushes upon the terrible vision which unmans him, and drives it from before him

with frantic outcries and despairing gestures.

It is no infrequent exhibition of fear in a courageous boy to fly at and strike the object of his dismay — a sort of instinctive method of ascertaining its nature, and so disarming its terrors; and these men are represented by Shakespeare as thus expressing the utmost impulse of a fear, to the intensity of which their words bear ample witness. Horatio says: "It harrows me with fear and wonder." Bernardo says to him: "How now, Horatio! you tremble and turn pale!" and Horatio, describing the vision and its effect upon himself and his companions, says to Hamlet —

"Thrice he walk'd  
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes  
Within his truncheon's length, whilst they,  
*distill'd*  
Almost to jelly with the act of fear," &c.

And it must be remembered that nothing in itself hideous, or revolting, appeared to these men — nothing but the image of the dead King of Denmark, familiar to them in the majestic sweetness of its countenance and bearing, and courteous and friendly in its gestures; and yet it fills them with unutterable terror. When the same vision appears to Hamlet — a young man with the noble spirit of a prince, a conscience void of all offence, and a heart yearning with aching tenderness towards the father whose beloved image stands before him precisely as his eyes had looked upon and loved it in life — how does he accost it? —

"What may this mean?  
That thou, *dead corse*, again in complete steel  
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature  
So horribly to shake our dispositions," &c.

The second time that Hamlet sees his father's ghost, when one might suppose that something of the horror attendant upon such a visitation would have been dispelled by the previous experience, his mother thus depicts the appearance that he presents to her —

"Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;  
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,  
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,  
Starts up and stands on end."

What a description of the mere physical revulsion with which living flesh and blood shrinks from the cold simulacrum of life —

so like and so utterly unlike — so familiar and yet so horribly strange! The agony is physical — not of the soul; for

“What can it do to that,  
Being a thing immortal as itself?”

exclaims the undaunted spirit of the young man; and in the closet scene with his mother passionate pity and tenderness for his father are the only emotions Hamlet expresses with his lips, while his eyes start from their sockets, and his hair rears itself on his scalp, with the terror inspired by the proximity of that “gracious figure.”

In “Julius Cæsar,” the emotion experienced by Brutus at the sight of Cæsar’s ghost is, if possible, even more to the purpose. The spirit of the firm Roman, composed to peaceful meditation after his tender and sweet reconciliation with his friend, and his exquisite kindness to his sleepy young slave, is quietly directed to the subject of his study, when the ghost of Cæsar appears to him, darkening by its presence the light of the taper by which he reads, and to which Shakespeare, according to the superstition of his day, imparts this sensitiveness to the preternatural influence. Brutus, in questioning his awful visitor, loses none of his stoical steadfastness of soul, and yet speaks of his blood running cold, and his hair *staring* with the horror of the unearthly visitation.

Surely, having thus depicted the effect of such an experience on such men as Horatio, Hamlet, Brutus, and Macbeth, Shakespeare can never have represented a woman, even though that woman was the bravest of her sex, and almost of her kind, as subjected to a like ordeal and utterly unmoved by it. An argument which appears to me conclusive on the point, however, is, that in the sleeping scene Lady Macbeth divulges nothing of the kind; and, even if it were possible to conceive her intrepidity equal to absolute silence and self-command under the intense and mingled terrors of the banquet scene *with* a perception of Banquo’s apparition, it is altogether impossible to imagine that the emotion she controlled then should not reveal itself in the hour of those unconscious confessions when she involuntarily strips bare the festering plagues of her bosom to the night and her appalled watchers, and in her ghastly slumbers, with the step and voice of some horrible automaton, moved by no human volition, but a dire compelling necessity, acts over again the mysteries of iniquity with which she has been familiar. But, on the contrary, while

wringing from her hands the warm gore of the murdered Duncan, and dragging, with the impotent effort of her agonized nightmare, her husband away from the sound of the “knocking” which reverberates still in the distracted chambers of her brain, almost the last words she articulates are: “I tell you yet again, Banquo is buried; he cannot come out of his grave.” Assuredly she never saw his ghost.

I am not inclined to agree, either, with the view which lends any special tenderness to Lady Macbeth’s demeanour towards her husband after the achievement of their bad eminence. She is not a woman to waste words, any more than other means to ends; and, therefore, her refraining from all reproaches at the disastrous close of their great festival is perfectly consistent with the vehemence of her irony, so long as she could hope by its fierce stimulus to rouse Macbeth from the delirium of terror into which he is thrown by the sight of Banquo’s ghost. While urging her husband to the King’s murder, she uses, with all the power and weight she can give to it, the “valour of her tongue,” which she foresaw in the first hour of receiving the written news of his advancement would be requisite, to “chastise” the irresolution of his spirit and the fluctuations of his purposes. She has her end to gain by talking, and she talks till she does gain it; and in those moments of mortal agony, when his terrors threaten with annihilation the fabric of their fortunes — that fearful fabric, based on such infinite depths of guilt, cemented with such costly blood — when she sees him rushing upon inevitable ruin, and losing every consciousness but that of his own crimes, she, like the rider whose horse, maddened with fear, is imperilling his own and that rider’s existence, drives the rowels of her piercing irony into him, and with a hand of iron guides, and urges, and *lifts* him over the danger. But, except in those supreme instants, where her purpose is to lash and goad him past the obstruction of his own terrors, her habitual tone, from beginning to end, is of a sort of contemptuous compassion towards the husband whose moral superiority of nature she perceives and despises, as men not seldom put by the finer and truer view of duty of women, as too delicate for common use, a weapon of too fine a temper for worldly warfare.

Her analysis of his character while still holding in her hand his affectionate letter, her admonition to him that his face betrays the secret disturbance of his mind, her advice that he will commit the business of the



King's murder to her management, her grave and almost kind solicitude at his moody solitary brooding over the irretrievable past, and her compassionate suggestion at the close of the banquet scene, —

"You want the season of all natures — sleep,"

when she must have seen the utter hopelessness of long concealing crimes which the miserable murderer would himself inevitably reveal in some convulsion of ungovernable remorse, are all indications of her own sense of superior power over the man whose nature wants the "illness" with which hers is so terribly endowed, who would "holly" that which he would "highly," who would not "play false," and yet would "wrongly win."

Nothing, indeed, can be more wonderfully perfect than Shakespeare's delineation of the evil nature of these two human souls — the evil strength of the one, and the evil weakness of the other.

The woman's wide-eyed, bold, collected leap into the abyss makes us gulp with terror; while we watch the man's blinking, shrinking, clinging, gradual slide into it, with a protracted agony akin to his own.

In admirable harmony with the conception of both characters is the absence in the case of Lady Macbeth of all the grotesquely terrible supernatural machinery by which the imagination of Macbeth is assailed and daunted. She reads of her husband's encounter with the witches, and the fulfilment of their first prophecy; and yet, while the men who encounter them (Banquo as much as Macbeth) are struck and fascinated by the wild quaintness of their weird figures, — with the description of which it is evident Macbeth has opened his letter to her, — her mind does not dwell for a moment on these "weak ministers" of the great power of evil. The metaphysical conception of the influence to which she dedicates herself is pure free-thinking compared with the superstitions of her times; and we cannot imagine her sweeping into the murky cavern, where the hellish juggleries of Hecate are played, and her phantasmagories revel round their filthy cauldron, without feeling that these petty devils would shrink appalled away from the presence of the awful woman who had made her bosom the throne of those "murdering ministers" who in their "sightless substance" attend on "nature's mischief."

Nor has Shakespeare failed to show how well, up to a certain point, the devil serves those who serve him well. The whole-hearted wickedness of Lady Macbeth buys

that exemption from "present fears" and "horrible imaginings" which Macbeth's half-allegiance to right cannot purchase for him. In one sense, good consciences — that is, tender ones — may be said to be the only bad ones: the very worst alone are those that hold their peace, and cease from clamouring. In sin, as in all other things, thoroughness has its reward; and the reward is blindness to fear, deafness to remorse, hardness to good, and moral insensibility to moral torture — the deadly gangrene instead of the agony of cauterization; a degradation below shame, fear, and pain. This point Lady Macbeth reaches at once, while from the first scene of the play to the last the wounded soul of Macbeth writhes, and cries, and groans, over its own gradual deterioration. Incessant returns upon himself and his own condition, betray a state of moral disquietude which is as ill-boding an omen of the spiritual state as the morbid feeling of his own pulse by a sickly self-observing invalid is of the physical condition; and, from the beginning to the end of his career, the several stages of his progress in guilt are marked by his own bitter consciousness of it. First, the startled misgiving as to his own motives:

"This supernatural soliciting  
Cannot be ill — cannot be good."

Then the admission of the necessity for the treacherous cowardly assumption of friendly hospitality, from which the brave man's nature and soldier's alike revolt:

"False face must hide what the false heart  
doth know."

Then the panic-stricken horror of the insisting:

"But *why* could not I pronounce Amen?  
I had most need of blessing, and Amen  
Stuck in my throat."

The vertigo of inevitable retribution:

"Glamis doth murder sleep,  
And therefore Cawdor shall sleep no more.  
Macbeth shall sleep no more!"

The utter misery of the question:

"How is it with me, when ev'ry noise appals  
me?"

The intolerable bitterness of the thought:

"For Banquo's issue have I *filed my breast*,  
And mine *eternal jewel* given;  
Given to the common enemy of mankind."

Later comes the consciousness of stony loss of fear and pity :

"The time has been  
My senses would have cool'd to hear a night-  
shriek.

Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
Cannot once stir me !"

After this, the dreary wretchedness of his detested and despised old age confronts him :

"And that which should accompany old age,  
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have."

Most wonderful of all is it, after reviewing the successive steps of this dire declension of the man's moral nature, to turn back to his first acknowledgment of that Divine government, that Supreme Rule of Right, by which the deeds of men meet righteous retribution "Here, even here, upon this bank and shoal of Time ;" that unhesitating confession of faith in the immutable justice and goodness of God with which he first opens the debate in his bosom, and contrasts it with the desperate blasphemy which he utters in the hour of his soul's final overthrow, when he proclaims life — man's life, the precious and mysterious object of God's moral government —

"A tale told by an idiot, full of sound and  
fury,  
*Signifying nothing !*"

The preservation of Macbeth's dignity in a degree sufficient to retain our sympathy, in spite of the preponderance of his wife's nature over his, depends on the two facts of his undoubted heroism in his relations with men, and his great tenderness for the woman whose evil will is made powerful over his partly by his affection for her. It is remarkable that hardly one scene passes where they are brought together in which he does not address to her some endearing appellation ; and, from his first written words to her whom he calls his "Dearest partner of greatness," to his pathetic appeal to her physician for some alleviation of her moral plagues, a love of extreme strength and tenderness is constantly manifested in every address to or mention of her that he makes. He seeks her sympathy alike in the season of his prosperous fortune and in the hour of his mental anguish :

"Oh, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife !"  
and in this same scene there is a touch of

essentially manly reverence for the womanly nature of her who has so little of it, that deserves to be classed among Shakespeare's most exquisite inspirations : — his refusing to pollute his wife's mind with the bloody horror of Banquo's proposed murder.

"Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest  
chuck !"

is a conception full of the tenderest and deepest refinement, contrasting wonderfully with the hard, unhesitating cruelty of her immediate suggestion in reply to his :

"Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance  
live,  
But in them Nature's copy's not eterne ;"

by which she clearly demonstrates that her own wickedness not only keeps pace with his, but has indeed, as in the business of the King's murder, reached at a bound that goal towards which he has struggled by slow degrees.

At the end of the banquet scene he appeals to her for her opinion on the danger threatened by Macduff's contumacious refusal of their invitation, and from first to last he so completely leans on her for support and solace in their miserable partnership of guilt and woe, that when we hear the ominous words :

"My Lord, the Queen is dead !"

we see him stagger under the blow which strikes from him the prop of that undaunted spirit in whose valour he found the never-failing stimulus of his own.

In the final encounter between Macbeth and the appointed avenger of blood it appears to me that the suggestion of his want of personal courage, put forward by some commentators on his character, is most triumphantly refuted. Until his sword crosses that of Macduff, and the latter, with his terrible defiance to the "Angel" \* whom Macbeth still has served, reveals to him the fact of his untimely birth, he has been like one drunk — maddened by the poisonous inspirations of the hellish oracles in which he has put his faith ; and his furious excitement is the delirium of mingled doubt and dread with which he clings, in spite of the

\* Noteworthy, in no small degree, is this word "Angel" here used by Macduff. Who but Shakespeare would not have written "Deird?" But what a tremendous vision of terrible splendour the word evokes ! what a visible presence of gloomy glory (even as of the great prince of pride, ambition, and rebellion) seems to rise in lurid majesty, and overshadow the figure of the baffled votary of evil !

gradual revelation of its falsehood, to the juggling promise which pronounced him master of a charmed life. But no sooner is the mist of this delusion swept from his mind, by the piercing blast of Macduff's interpretation of the promise, than the heroic nature of the man once more proclaims itself. The fire of his spirit flames above the "ashes of his chance;" the intrepid courage of the great chieftain leaps up again in one last blaze of desperate daring; and alone — deserted by his followers and betrayed by his infernal allies — he stands erect in the undaunted bravery of his nature, confronting the eyes of Death as they glare at him from Macduff's sockets, and exclaims, "Yet will I try the last." One feeling only mingles with this expiring flash of resolute heroism, one most pathetic reference to the human detestation from which in that supreme hour he shrinks as much as from degradation — more than from death.

"I will not yield,  
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's  
foot,  
And to be baited by the rabble's curse."

It is the last cry of the human soul, cut off from the love and reverence of humanity; and with that he rushes out of the existence made intolerable by the hatred of his kind.

From Temple Bar.

#### TORNADOES.

BY RICHARD A. PROCTOR, B.A., F.R.A.S.,

AUTHOR OF "SATURN AND ITS SYSTEM," &c.

THE inhabitants of the earth are subjected to agencies which — beneficial, doubtless, in the long run, perhaps necessary to the very existence of terrestrial races — appear, at first sight, energetically destructive. Such are — in order of destructiveness — the hurricane, the earthquake, the volcano, and the thunderstorm. When we read of earthquakes, such as those which overthrew Lisbon, Callao, and Riobamba, and learn that one hundred thousand persons fell victims in the great Sicilian earthquake in 1693, and probably three hundred thousand in the two earthquakes which assailed Antioch in the years 526 and 612, we are disposed to assign at once to this devastating phenom-

non the foremost place among the agents of destruction. But this judgment must be reversed when we consider that earthquakes — though so fearfully and suddenly destructive both to life and property, — yet occur but seldom compared with wind-storms, while the effects of a real hurricane are scarcely less destructive than those of the sharpest shocks of earthquake. After ordinary storms, long miles of the sea-coast are strewn with the wrecks of many once gallant ships, and with the bodies of their hapless crews. In the spring of 1866 there might be seen at a single view from the heights near Plymouth twenty-two shipwrecked vessels, and this after a storm, which, though severe, was but trifling compared with the hurricanes which sweep over the torrid zones, and thence, scarcely diminished in force, as far north sometimes as our own latitudes. It was in such a hurricane that the "Royal Charter" was wrecked, and hundreds of stout ships with her. In the great hurricane of 1780, which commenced at Barbadoes and swept across the whole breadth of the North Atlantic, fifty sail were driven ashore at the Bermudas, two line-of-battle ships went down at sea, and upwards of twenty thousand persons lost their lives on the land. So tremendous was the force of this hurricane (Captain Maury tells us) that "the bark was blown from the trees, and the fruits of the earth destroyed; the very bottom and depths of the sea were uprooted — forts and castles were washed away, and their great guns carried in the air like chaff; houses were razed; ships wrecked; and the bodies of men and beasts lifted up in the air and dashed to pieces in the storm" — an account, however, which (though doubtless faithfully rendered by Maury from the authorities he consulted) must perhaps be accepted *cum grano*, and especially with reference to the great guns carried in the air "like chaff." \*

In the gale of August, 1782, all the trophies of Lord Rodney's victory, except the "Ardent," were destroyed, two British ships-of-the-line foundered at sea, numbers of merchantmen under Admiral Graves' convoy were wrecked, and at sea alone three thousand lives were lost.

But, quite recently, a storm far more destructive than these swept over the Bay of Bengal. Most of our readers doubtless remember the great gale of October, 1864, in which all the ships in harbour at Calcutta

\* We remember to have read that in this hurricane guns which had long lain under water were washed up like mere drift upon the beach. Perhaps this circumstance grew gradually into the incredible story above recorded.

were swept from their anchorage, and driven one upon another in inextricable confusion. Fearful as was the loss of life and property in Calcutta harbour, the destruction on land was greater. A vast wave swept for miles over the surrounding country, embankments were destroyed, and whole villages, with their inhabitants, swept away. Fifty thousand souls it is believed perished in this fearful hurricane.

The gale which has just ravaged the Gulf of Mexico adds another to the long list of disastrous hurricanes. As we write, the effects produced by this tornado are beginning to be made known. Already its destructiveness has become but too certainly evidenced.

The laws which appear to regulate the generation and the progress of cyclonic storms are well worthy of careful study.

The regions chiefly infested by hurricanes are the West Indies, the southern parts of the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal, and the China seas. Each region has its special hurricane season.

In the West Indies, cyclones occur principally in August and September, when the south-east monsoons are at their height. At the same season the African south-westerly monsoons are blowing. Accordingly there are two sets of winds, both blowing heavily and steadily from the Atlantic, disturbing the atmospheric equilibrium, and thus in all probability generating the great West Indian hurricanes. The storms thus arising show their force first at a distance of about six or seven hundred miles from the equator, and far to the east of the region in which they attain their greatest fury. They sweep with a north-westerly course to the Gulf of Mexico, pass thence northwards, and so to the north-east, sweeping in a wide curve (resembling the letter U placed thus  $\sqcup$ ) around the West Indian seas, and thence travelling across the Atlantic, generally expending their fury before they reach the shores of Western Europe. This course is the storm-track (or storm- $\sqcup$  as we shall call it). Of the behaviour of the winds as they traverse this track, we shall have to speak when we come to consider the peculiarity from which these storms derive their names of "cyclones" and "tornadoes."

The hurricanes of the Indian Ocean occur at the "changing of the monsoons." "During the interregnum," writes Maury, "the fiends of the storm hold their terrific sway." Becalmed, often, for a day or two, seamen hear moaning sounds in the air, forewarning them of the coming storm. Then, suddenly, the winds break loose from the forces which

have for awhile controlled them, and "seem to rage with a fury that would break up the fountains of the deep."

In the North Indian seas hurricanes rage at the same season as in the West Indies.

In the China seas occur those fearful gales known among sailors as "typhoons," or "white squalls." These take place at the changing of the monsoons. Generated, like the West Indian hurricanes, at a distance of some ten or twelve degrees from the equator, typhoons sweep in a curve similar to that followed by the Atlantic storms around the East Indian Archipelago, and the shores of China to the Japanese Islands.

There occur land-storms, also, of a cyclonic character in the valley of the Mississippi. "I have often observed the paths of such storms," says Maury, "through the forests of the Mississippi. There the track of these tornadoes is called a 'wind-road,' because they make an avenue through the wood straight along, and as clear of trees as if the old denizens of the forest had been cleared with an axe. I have seen trees three or four feet in diameter torn up by the roots, and the top, with its limbs, lying next the hole whence the root came." Another writer, who was an eyewitness to the progress of one of these American land-storms, thus speaks of its destructive effects. "I saw, to my great astonishment, that the noblest trees of the forest were falling into pieces. A mass of branches, twigs, foliage, and dust moved through the air, whirled onwards like a cloud of feathers, and passing, disclosed a wide space filled with broken trees, naked stumps, and heaps of shapeless ruins, which marked the path of the tempest."

If it appeared, on a careful comparison of observations made in different places, that these winds swept directly along those tracks which they appear to follow, a comparatively simple problem would be presented to the meteorologist. But this is not found to be the case. At one part of a hurricane's course the storm appears to be travelling with fearful fury along the true storm- $\sqcup$ ; at another less furiously directly across the storm-track; at another, but with yet diminished force, though still fiercely, in a direction exactly opposite to that of the storm-track.

All these motions appear to be fairly accounted for by the theory that the true path of the storm is a spiral — or rather, that while the centre of disturbance continually travels onwards in a widely extended curve, the storm-wind sweeps continually around the centre of disturbance, as a whirlpool around its vortex.

And here a remarkable circumstance at-

tracts our notice, the consideration of which points to the mode in which cyclones may be conceived to be generated. It is found, by a careful study of different observations made upon the same storm, that cyclones in the northern hemisphere *invariably* sweep round the onward travelling vortex of disturbance in *one* direction, and southern cyclones in the contrary direction. If we place a watch-face upwards upon one of the northern cyclone regions in a Mercator's chart, then the motion of the hands is *contrary* to the direction in which the cyclone whirls; when the watch is shifted to a southern cyclone region, the motion of the hands takes place in the same direction as the cyclone motion. This peculiarity is converted into the following rule-of-thumb for sailors who encounter a cyclone, and seek to escape from the region of fiercest storm:—*Facing the wind, the centre or vortex of the storm lies to the right in the northern, to the left in the southern, hemisphere.* Safety lies in flying from the centre in every case save one—that is, when the sailor lies in the direct track of the advancing vortex. In this case, to fly from the centre would be to keep in the storm-track; the proper course for the sailor when thus situated is to steer for the calmer side of the storm-track. This is always the outside of the  $\sqsubset$ , as will appear from a moment's consideration of the spiral curve traced out by a cyclone. Thus, if the seaman *scud before the wind*—in all other cases a dangerous expedient in a cyclone\*—he will probably escape unscathed. There is, however, this danger, that the storm-track may extend to or even slightly overlap the land, in which case scudding before the gale would bring the ship upon a lee-shore. And in this way many gallant ships have, doubtless, suffered wreck.

The danger of the sailor is obviously greater, however, when he is overtaken by the storm on the inner side of the storm- $\sqsubset$ . Here he has to encounter the double force of the cyclonic whirl and of the advancing storm-system, instead of the difference of the two motions, as on the outer side of the storm-track. His chance of escape will depend on his distance from the central path of the cyclone. If near to this, it is equally dangerous for him to attempt to scud to the safer side of the track, or to beat against the wind by the shorter course, which would lead him out of the storm- $\sqsubset$  on its inner side. It has been shown by Colonel Sir W. Reid that this is the quarter

in which vessels have been most frequently lost.

But even the danger of this most dangerous quarter admits of degrees. It is greatest where the storm is sweeping round the most curved part of its track, which happens in about latitude twenty-five or thirty degrees. In this case, a ship may pass twice through the vortex of the storm. Here hurricanes have worked their most destructive effect. And thus it happens that sailors dread, most of all, the part of the Atlantic near Florida and the Bahamas, and the region of the Indian Ocean which lies south of Bourbon and Mauritius.

To show how important it is that captains should understand the theory of cyclones in both hemispheres, we shall here relate the manner in which Captain J. V. Hall escaped from a typhoon of the China seas. About noon, when three days out from Macao, Captain Hall saw "a most wild and uncommon-looking halo round the sun." On the afternoon of the next day, the barometer had commenced to fall rapidly; and though, as yet, the weather was fine, orders were at once given to prepare for a heavy gale. Towards evening, a bank of cloud was seen in the southeast, but when night closed the weather was still calm and the water smooth, though the sky looked wild and a scud was coming on from the north-east. "I was much interested," says Captain Hall, "in watching for the commencement of the gale, which I now felt sure was coming."

But the most remarkable point of Captain Hall's account remains to be mentioned. He had gone out of his course to avoid the storm, but when the wind fell to a moderate gale he thought it a pity to lie so far from his proper course, and made sail to the north-west. "In less than two hours the barometer again began to fall and the storm to rage in heavy gusts. He bore again to the south-east, and the weather rapidly improved." There can be little doubt that but for Captain Hall's knowledge of the law of cyclones, his ship and crew would have been placed in serious jeopardy, since in the heart of a Chinese typhoon a ship has been known to be thrown on her beam-ends when not showing a yard of canvas.

If we consider the regions in which cyclones appear, the paths they follow, and the direction in which they whirl, we shall be able to form a guess at their origin. In the open Pacific Ocean (as its name, indeed, implies) storms are uncommon; they are unfrequent also in the South Atlantic and South Indian Oceans. Around Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope, heavy storms prevail, but they are

\* A ship by scudding before the gale may—if the captain is not familiar with the laws of cyclones—go *round and round* without escaping. The ship "Charles Heddle" did this in the East Indies, going round no less than *five times*.



not cyclonic, nor are they equal in fury and frequency, Maury tells us, to the true tornado. Along the equator, and for several degrees on either side of it, cyclones are also unknown. If we turn to a map in which ocean-currents are laid down, we shall see that in every "cyclone region" there is a strongly-marked current, and that each current follows closely the track which we have denominated the storm-*c*. In the North Atlantic we have the great Gulf Stream, which sweeps from equatorial regions into the Gulf of Mexico, and thence across the Atlantic to the shores of Western Europe. In the South Indian Ocean there is the "south-equatorial current," which sweeps past Mauritius and Bourbon, and thence returns towards the east. In the Chinese Sea, there is the north equatorial current, which sweeps round the East Indian Archipelago, and then merges into the Japanese current. There is also the current in the Bay of Bengal, flowing through the region in which, as we have seen, cyclones are commonly met with. There are other sea-currents besides these which yet breed no cyclones. But we may notice two peculiarities in the currents we have named. They all flow from equatorial to temperate regions, and, secondly, they are all "horse-shoe currents." So far as we are aware, there is but one other current which presents both these peculiarities, namely—the great Australian current between New Zealand and the eastern shores of Australia. We have not yet met with any record of cyclones occurring over the Australian current, but heavy storms are known to prevail in that region, and we believe that when these storms have been studied as closely as the storms in better-known regions, they will be found to present the true cyclonic character.

Now, if we inquire why an ocean current travelling from the equator should be a "storm-breeder," we shall find a ready answer. Such a current, carrying the warmth of intertropical regions to the temperate zones, produces in the first place, by the mere difference of temperature, important atmospheric disturbances. The difference is so great, that Franklin suggested the use of the thermometer in the North Atlantic Ocean as a ready means of determining the longitude, since the position of the Gulf Stream at any given season, is almost constant.

But the warmth of the stream itself is not the only cause of atmospheric disturbance. Over the warm water vapor is continually rising; and, as it rises, is continu-

ally condensed (like the steam from a locomotive) by the colder air round. "An observer on the moon," says Captain Maury, "would, on a winter's day, be able to trace out by the mist in the air, the path of the Gulf Stream through the sea." But what must happen when vapor is condensed? We know that to turn water into vapor is a process requiring—that is, *using up*—a large amount of heat; and, conversely, the return of vapor to the state of water *sells free* an equivalent quantity of heat. The amount of heat thus set free over the Gulf Stream is thousands of times greater than that which would be generated by the whole coal supply annually raised in Great Britain. Here, then, we have an efficient cause for the wildest hurricanes. For, along the whole of the Gulf Stream, from Bemini to the Grand Banks, there is a channel of heated—that is, *rarefied* air. Into this channel the denser atmosphere on both sides is continually pouring, with greater or less strength, and when a storm begins in the Atlantic, it always makes for this channel, "and, reaching it, turns and follows it in its course, sometimes entirely across the Atlantic." "The southern points of America and Africa have won for themselves," says Maury, "the name of 'the stormy capes,' but there is not a storm-fiend in the wide ocean can out-top that which rages along the Atlantic coasts of North America. The China seas and the North Pacific may vie in the fury of their gales with this part of the Atlantic, but Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope cannot equal them, certainly in frequency, nor do I believe, in fury." We read of a West Indian storm so violent, that "it forced the Gulf Stream back to its sources, and piled up the water to a height of thirty feet in the Gulf of Mexico. The ship 'Ledbury Snow' attempted to ride out the storm. When it abated, she found herself high up on the dry land, and discovered that she had let go her anchor among the tree-tops on Elliott's Key."

By a like reasoning we can account for the cyclonic storms prevailing in the North Pacific Ocean. Nor do the tornadoes which rage in parts of the United States present any serious difficulty. The region along which these storms travel is the valley of the great Mississippi. This river at certain seasons is considerably warmer than the surrounding lands. From its surface, also, aqueous vapor is continually being raised. When the surrounding air is colder, this vapor is presently condensed, generating in the change a vast amount of heat. We have

thus a channel of rarefied air over the Mississippi valley, and this channel becomes a storm-track like the corresponding channels over the warm ocean-currents. The extreme violence of land-storms is probably due to the narrowness of the track within which they are compelled to travel. For it has been noticed that the fury of a sea-cyclone increases as the range of the "whirl" diminishes, and *vice versa*.

There seems, however, no special reason why cyclones should follow the storm-track in one direction rather than in the other. We must, to understand this, recall the fact that under the torrid zones the conditions necessary to the generation of storms prevail far more intensely than in temperate regions. Thus the probability is far greater that cyclones should be generated at the tropical than at the temperate end of the storm-track. Still it is worthy of notice, that in the landlocked North Pacific Ocean, true typhoons have been known to follow the storm-track in a direction contrary to that commonly noticed.

The direction in which a true tornado whirls is *invariably* that we have mentioned. The explanation of this peculiarity would occupy more space than we can here afford. Those of our readers who may wish to understand the origin of the law of cyclonic rotation should study Herschel's interesting work on Meteorology.

The suddenness with which a true tornado works destruction was strikingly exemplified in the wreck of the steam-ship "San Francisco." She was assailed by an extra-tropical tornado when about 300 miles from Sandy Hook, on December 24, 1853. In a few moments she was a complete wreck! The wide range of a tornado's destructiveness is shown by this, that Colonel Reid examined one along whose track no less than 110 ships were wrecked, crippled, or dismantled.

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#### ABOUT ONE'S FIRST NIGHT AT THE PLAY.

##### A RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW.

BY FRANCIS JACOB.

THE first thing one thinks of in surveying the literature illustrative of one's first night at the play is, of course, Elia's Essay. Every point of detail in that narrative speaks home to every reader; and the el-

derly ones, like Elia himself, seem to shake off forty years from their shoulders as they read. How the afternoon had been wet, and the condition of the boy's going was that the rain should cease; with what a beating heart, therefore, he watched from the window the puddles, from the stillness of which he was taught to prognosticate the desired cessation; how well he remembered the last spurt, and the glee with which he ran to announce it; how the party went with pit-orders; with what longing expectancy he awaited the opening of the doors, while the cry of nonpareils greeted his ears; the breathless anticipations he endured when fairly inside, and gazing on the green curtain that veiled an elysium to his imagination, soon to be disclosed; how the orchestra lights at length arose, those "fair Auroras!" — once the bell sounded — it was to ring out once again — then the curtain drew up — Elia was not past six years old, and the play was Artaxerxes! — are not all these stages in the progress of the essay almost as fresh in the remembrance of each one of us, as his own, his very own, first night at the play?

After Charles Lamb's first experiences in play-going at the age of six or seven, there was an interval of some years, during his school-life (for at school all play-going was inhibited). Meanwhile, that old Artaxerxes evening had never done ringing in his fancy; and when he again entered by the pit-door, he expected the same feelings to come again with the same occasion. But we differ from ourselves less, he observes, at sixty and sixteen, than sixteen does from six. In that interval what had he not lost! At the first period he knew nothing, understood nothing, discriminated nothing. He felt all, loved all, wondered all. He had left the temple a devotee, and was returned a rationalist. The same things were there materially; but the emblem, the reference, was gone. "The green curtain was no longer a veil, drawn between two worlds, the unfolding of which was to bring back past ages to present a 'royal ghost,' — but a certain quantity of green baize, which was to separate the audience for a given time from certain of their fellow-men who were to come forward and pretend those parts. The lights — the orchestra lights — came up a clumsy machinery. The first ring, and the second ring, was now but a trick of the prompter's bell — which had been, like the note of the cuckoo, a phantom of a voice, no hand seen or guessed at which ministered to its warning. The ac-

tors were men and women painted.\* Elia thought at the time the fault was in them. But long before he came to write that regretful retrospective essay, he knew it to be in himself, and the alterations which those many centuries (of six short twelve-months) had wrought in him. — The closing pages of this paper will recur to the disenchantment wrought by a few short years in tarnishing the tinsel and making dim the finest gold-leaf of the stage, as beheld by eyes that, however young still, are getting the worse for wear. Before advancing to which dreary epoch of disillusion, some intermediate pages will serve to cite from a variety of quarters what is to be read in print of first impressions at one's first play.

In explanation of Schiller's neglect at school of the appointed classical studies, his English biographer tells us that he loved rather to meditate on the splendour of the Ludwigsburg theatre, which had inflamed his imagination when he first saw it in his ninth year, and had given shape and materials for many of his subsequent reveries.†

Cumberland records his being taken, "under proper convoy," from Westminster School, to see, "for the first time in my life," young Garrick in *Lothario*. "My attention was riveted to the scene. I have the spectacle even now, as it were, before my eyes."‡ And he places it before ours, in a graphic passage of critical merit.

All that George Colman the Younger tells us of the first play he ever saw acted, is, that it was in the playhouse on Richmond-green. He had forgotten the name of the piece; but it appears that he must have been initiated early in theatricals, from his having been in petticoats when he assisted at this representation. "Little did I then think," he remarks, "while witnessing this play, in the days of my innocence, that I should be guilty of writing so many."§ There is no enthusiasm in his memory of the event—but neither was there any in George Colman's character.

Mrs. Piozzi records her being taken, at six years old, to see *Quin act Cato*, by the Duke and Duchess of Leeds,—and how she made him a formal curtsy,|| much to the amusement of the Duchess, and perhaps of the player. They sat in the stage-box, where little Miss kept on studying the part

with all her might, "not at all distracted," she says, "by the lights or company, which they fancied would take my attention."\*

Mr. Peacock is probably relating something within his experience when he makes one of his characters refer to a first play, seen in days when ghosts were so popular, that the first question asked about any play was, Is there a ghost in it? The "*Castle Spectre*" had set this fashion; and this was the play in question. "The opening of the folding-doors disclosing the illuminated oratory; the extreme beauty of the actress who personated the ghost; the solemn music to which she moved slowly forward to give a silent blessing to her kneeling daughter; and the chorus of female voices chanting *Jubilate*; made an impression on me which no other scene of the kind has ever made."†

It was at St. Malo that Chateaubriand saw his first play. A troop of wandering comedians had just landed; and Chateaubriand's elder brother told him to get his hat, he was going to take him to the theatre. The boy's brain was in a whirlwind at the news. He had already seen puppets, and he fancied they would meet at the theatre with Punchinellos much finer than those of the street. With palpitating heart he reached a wooden building, in a deserted street of the town, and made his way through dark corridors, not without a certain feeling of terror: "A little door opens, and behold me, along with my brother, in a box half filled with people.

"The curtain was up, and the piece had commenced. The play was '*The Father of a Family*.' I perceived two men who were walking on the stage, conversing, and on whom every eye was fixed. I took them for directors of the puppets, who were chatting in front of Madame d'Gigogne's cottage whilst waiting for the arrival of the public. I was only astonished that they spoke so loud about their affairs, and that they were listened to in silence. My stupefaction was redoubled when other personages made their appearance on the stage, and began to move their arms about and to weep, and when every person began to weep from the force of contagion. The curtain fell, without my having been able to comprehend anything of the matter." Chateaubriand frankly owns that before the next piece began—his brother having left him in the box, among strangers—he longed to be back again at his college.

\* *Essays of Elia: My First Play, passim.*

† *Carlyle's Life of Schiller*, part i.

‡ *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland*, p. 50.

§ *Memoirs of the Colman Family*, i. 205.

|| Mr. Quin had taught her to recite *Satan's* speech to the Sun, in "*Paradise Lost*."

\* *Autobiographical Memoirs of Mrs. Piozzi*, i. 215.

† *Gryll Grange*, ch. xxxiv.

Such was the first impression he received of the art of Sophocles and Molière.\*

The biographer of the Kemble family tells us how Master Betty, for his first play, was taken to see perfection, in the acting of Mrs. Siddons as Elvira; and how an enthusiasm so ardent was kindled in the boy's mind, that, while resolving to be an actor, he at the same time, and for some time after, "with the simplicity of a child, thought of nothing but Elvira;—he spoke only the speeches of Elvira;—the voice of Siddons perpetually sounded in his ear, and it was some time before his studies would take the direction even of his sex."†

Mathews was, by his own account, fourteen, before he saw his first play. "Oh the delights of that night!" The very curtain filled him with ecstatic anticipations; the scenery, the dresses, the feathers, the russet boots, the very smell of the theatre, that mixture of orange-peel and oil, the applause in which he joined so heartily as to bring all eyes and many remarks upon him, to the great scandal of his cicerone,—his friend Litchfield, of the Council-office,—filled his senses with delight. "From that night my mind was in a state of splendid irritation; I could scarcely walk the streets without offering 'my kingdom for a horse' to every pedestrian I met. At night I could not rest, Macbeth *did* murder sleep; and I recited Lear up three pair of stairs to a four-legged bedstead."‡ His excess of demonstrativeness reminds us of Mr. Thackeray's lively and life-like picture of his young friend Master Jones, who was not yet sophisticated by the world, in his demeanour at the play: his discovery of his schoolfellow Smith yonder in the pit, whose attention he attracted, as well as that of the house, by his incessant nodding, winking, grinning, and telegraphing; and whenever anything in the play struck him as worthy of applause, Jones instantly made signals to Smith below, and shook his fist at him, as much as to say, "By Jove, old fellow, ain't it good? I say, Smith, isn't it *prime*, old boy?" He actually made remarks on his fingers to Master Smith during the performance.

"I confess he was one of the best parts of the night's entertainment to me. How Jones and Smith will talk about that play when they meet after holidays! And not only then will they remember it, but all their lives long. Why do you remember

that play you saw thirty years ago, and forget the one over which you yawned last week? Ah, my brave little boy, I thought, in my heart: twenty years hence you will recollect this, and have forgotten many a better thing. You will have been in love twice or thrice by that time, and have forgotten it; you will have buried your wife, and forgotten her; you will have had ever so many friendships, and forgotten them. You and Smith won't care for each other, very probably: but you'll remember all the actors and the plot of the piece we are seeing."\*

There are few things, Sir Walter Scott affirms, in a well-known passage, which those gifted with any degree of imagination recollect with a sense of more anxious and mysterious delight, than the first dramatic representation which they have witnessed. There is the unusual form of the house—as he goes on to depict the scene—filled with such groups of crowded spectators, themselves forming an extraordinary spectacle to the eye which has never witnessed it before, yet all intent upon that wide and mystic curtain whose dusky undulations permit us now and then to discern the momentary glitter of some gaudy form, or the spangles of some sandaled foot which trips lightly within; and there is the light, brilliant as that of day, and the music, which, in itself a treat sufficient in every other situation, our inexperience mistakes for the very play we came to witness. Leigh Hunt pictures in little the scene at large:

Yes, I beheld the old accustomed sight,  
Pit, boxes, galleries; I was at "the play;"  
I saw uprise the stage's strange floor-day,  
And music tuning as in tune's despite;  
Childhood I saw, glad-faced, that squeezeth  
tight  
One's hand, while the rapt curtain soars away.†

But let Sir Walter describe this last sensation—the slow rise of the shadowy curtain, disclosing, as if by actual magic, "a new land, with woods, and mountains, and lakes lighted, it seems to us, by another sun, and inhabited by a race of beings different from ourselves, whose language is poetry, whose dress, demeanour, and sentiments seem something supernatural, and whose whole actions and discourse are calculated, not for the ordinary tone of everyday life, but to excite the stronger and more powerful faculties—to melt with sorrow—overpower with terror—astonish with

\* Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe, t. i.

† Borden Life of J. P. Kemble, ii. 395.

‡ Autobiography of Charles Mathews (the elder), ch. iv.

\* Sketches and Travels in London: A Night's Pleasure, § ii.

† Sonnets to the Author of "Ion," No. ii.

the marvellous — or convulse with irresistible laughter." He goes on to show that the mixed feelings which perplex us between a sense that the scene is but a plaything, and an interest that ever and anon surprises us into a transient belief that what so strongly affects us cannot be fictitious, — these "mixed and puzzling feelings, also, are exciting in the highest degree." And then he takes into account the bursts of applause, like distant thunder, and "the permission accorded to clap our little hands, and add our own scream of delight to a sound so commanding." A personal interest is added to his *résumé* when Sir Walter adds, "All this — and much — much more is fresh in our memory, although, when we felt these sensations, we looked on the stage which Garrick had not yet left. It is now a long while since, yet we have not passed many hours of such unmixed delight — and we still remember the sinking lights, the dispersing crowd, with the vain longings which we felt, that the music would again sound, the magic curtain once more arise, and the enchanting dream recommence; and the astonishment with which we looked upon the apathy of the elder part of our company, who, having the means, did not spend every evening in the theatre."\*

In the fragmentary autobiography with which Sir Walter has at once charmed and tantalised the world, he declares the most delightful of his recollections of Bath — where the little lame boy lived about a year — to refer to his Uncle Robert taking him to the theatre. "The play was 'As You Like It'; and the witchery of the whole scene is alive in my mind at this moment. I made, I believe, noise more than enough, and remember being so much scandalised at the quarrel between Orlando and his brother in the first scene, that I screamed out, 'A'n't they brothers?'"† (A few weeks' residence at home, he confesses, convinced him, who had till then been an only child in the house of his grandfather, that a quarrel between brothers was a very natural event.)

Washington Irving's earliest play-going was in his thirteenth year, to see "Speculation," a comedy in which the acting of Jefferson delighted him beyond measure.‡ Talfourd was denied by the conscientious scruples of friends an early acquaintance

with plays; and he declares it would be idle to describe the transport with which, for the first time, he saw the curtain of Covent Garden Theatre raised for the representation of "Cato."\* William Etty, a veteran returned to his native York, records in his letters, among other simple pleasures in the old city, how he looked in "at half-price at the Old York Theatre," where he "saw as a child 'Jane Shore,' and the 'Fitch of Bacon.'"† — Hartley Coleridge, in a marginal note to the *London Magazine*, No. xxii., states "Town and Country" to have been his first play in London, 1807, then in the course of a successful run at Covent Garden; Kemble as Reuben Glenroy. Hartley retained little remembrance of it, only the peculiarity of Kemble's enunciation and his fine statue-like face took up their abode with him; and he was wonderfully pleased with a moon which a companion compared to a copper warming-pan. "Though I could make little either of its plot, its pathos, or its wit, and thought it neither so good nor so well acted as plays I had seen at Keswick [for this was not Hartley's first Play, pure and simple, but his first London one], the splendid house, the tiered boxes, the almost stupendous galleries, and the novelty of sliding scenes (which were not, however, so perfectly illusive as I expected London scenes to be), kept me as happy as wonder could make me, not a little vexed at the angry disgust expressed by the adults of my party. 'Mother Goose' succeeded, with Grimaldi in all his glory, and became my thought by day, my dream by night."‡ On another occasion he saw the "Wood Demon" — his account of which, as seen through the long vista of some seven or eight lustres, his brother, the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, thinks sufficiently curious to print, long as it is, in the Appendix to his *Memoir of poor Hartley*.

Doctor Dove, Southey's Dr. Dove, *The Doctor*, used to say he doubted whether Garrick and Mrs. Cibber could have affected him more in middle life than he was affected by the Punch of the Ingleton Company, and the wooden Jane Shore in Rowland Dixon's piece, as witnessed in his boyhood. For rude as were these performances (and nothing could possibly be ruder), the effect on infant minds was prodigious, from the accompanying sense of wonder, an emotion which the Doctor rightly declares to be of all

\* *Quarterly Review*, April, 1826. — In this article Sir Walter Scott took a genial notice, *more suo*, of Boudier's *Life of Kemble* and of the Reminiscences of Michael Kelly.

† *Autobiography*, ch. i.

‡ *Life and Letters of Washington Irving*, ch. ii.

\* See Talfourd's Preface to "Ion."

† *Life of W. Etty, R.A.*, ch. xx.

‡ See the Rev. Derwent Coleridge's *Memoir of his Brother*, p. xxxix.



others, at that time of life, the most delightful. "Here was miracle in any quantity to be seen for twopence, and be believed in for nothing. No matter how confined the theatre, how coarse and inartificial the scenery, or how miserable the properties; the mind supplied all that was wanting."\* The village children, in a popular novel, are truthfully pictured haunting the Green after the Fair is over and the booths all gone — looking on the vestiges with feelings almost of veneration, as marking the great epoch of their lives. "For with them it was all magic; their eyes were kaleidoscopes in the production of dazzling and ever-varying images," until time should break up the illusion, and show them some day too ruthlessly, that all they had been admiring was made up but of shadows, and borrowed brightness, and bits of rubbish.† Geoffrey Crayon's Buckthorne has no words to describe his boyhood's rapture at a first fair — the humours of Punch, the feats of the equestrians, the magical tricks of the conjurers; but above all, the itinerant theatre, where a tragedy, pantomime, and farce, were all acted in the course of half an hour. "I have since seen many a play performed by the best actors in the world, but never have I derived half the delight from any that I did from this first representation." Even after he had come out from the play, he could not tear himself from the vicinity, but lingered gazing and wondering, and laughing at the performers as they exhibited their antics, or danced on a stage in front of the booth, to decoy a new set of spectators.‡

When Anthony à Wood was five or six years old, he was "conveyed in a servant's arms" to the rooms of a canon of Christ Church, — from a mound in whose garden, looking into Fish-street, the boy saw the King, Queen, Prince Rupert, and a gallant train besides, riding down the said street into Christ Church great quadrangle — their majesties having come over to Oxford from Woodstock that day. "This was the first time he ever saw the said K. and queen," Anthony records in his *Life*, "and the first time that he ever saw such a glorious train as that was, which he would often talk of when he was a man."§ The impression left by stage king and queen is often quite as vivid and lasting, nor is the spectator, in many cases, less apt to talk of it when he is a man.

Mr. Sala's essay, entitled *First Fruits*, comprises, among other primary experiences, a retrospective review of the first pair of trousers, and the first picture-book, the first oyster, and the first watch, the first love (primary of primaries), and the first baby; nor does it omit the first pawning, and the first death. But the first play makes up one of its most zestful paragraphs. The essayist dilates on the promise, the hope deferred, the saving clause of conditional fine weather; on the willing submission that evening, to the otherwise, and at any other time, detestable ordeal of washing, and combing, and being made straight. "We did not complain when the soap got into our eyes; we bore the scraping of the comb and the rasping of the brush without a murmur: we were going to the play, and we were happy." Then follows a realistic picture of the little boy dressed, of course, an hour too soon; drinking tea as a mere ceremony — for the tea might have been hay and hot water (not impossible), and the bread-and-butter might have been sawdust, for any thing he could taste of it; sitting with petful impatience, trying on the first pair of white kid gloves, making sure that the theatre would be burnt down, or that papa would never come home from the office, or mamma would be prevented, by some special interference of malignant demons, from having her dress fastened, or that (to a positive certainty) a tremendous storm of hail, rain, sleet, and thunder, would burst out at the last moment, and end by sending the wistful expectant theatreless to bed. But these sombre apprehensions are dispelled. "We went to the play, and were happy. The sweet, dingy, shabby little country theatre, we declared, and believed to be, much larger than either Drury Lane or Covent Garden. . . . Dear narrow, uncomfortable, faded-cushioned, flea-haunted, single-tier of boxes! The green curtain, with a hole in it, through which a bright eye peeped. . . . The pit, with so few people in it; with the lady who sold apples and oranges sitting in a remote corner, like Pomona in the sulks. And the play when it did begin — stupid, badly acted, badly got up, as it very likely was. Our intense, fear-stricken admiration of the heroine, when she let her back hair down, and went mad, in blue. The buff boots of Runt, the manager. The funny man (there never was such a funny man) in a red scratch wig, who, when imprisoned in the deepest dungeon beneath the castle moat, sang a comic song about a leg of mutton." Nor be forgotten the essayist's

\* The Doctor, ch. xxiii.

† Christopher Tadpole, ch. vii.

‡ Tales of a Traveller: Buckthorne.

§ Life of Anthony à Wood, Aug. 29, 1636.

mention of the sorry quadrille band in the orchestra, to child ears as scientifically melodious as though Costa had been conductor, Sivori first fiddle, Richardson flute, or Bottesini double bass. Nor the refreshment, administered by kind hands during the intervals of performance, — oranges and immemorial sponge-cakes; nor the admonitions to "sit up," the warnings not to "talk loud," in defiance of which, "seeing condonatory smiles on the faces of those we loved, we screamed outright with laughter, when the funny man, in the after-piece, essaying to scale a first-floor front by means of a rope ladder, fell, ladder and all, to the ground." And so we come to the final fall of the green curtain, followed by an aromatic perfume of orange-peel and lamp-oil, and the mysterious appearance of ghostly brown holland draperies from the private boxes; to which add the process of shawling, cloaking, and going home, with a bonus of one or two or more primaries; for it was then "we for the first time 'sat up late,' and for the first time ever tasted sandwiches after midnight, or imbibed a sip, a very small sip, of hot something and water."\*

That was going to the play, indeed, to Hazlitt, as he recalls the time when he went twice a year, and had not been more than half a dozen times in his life; — even the idea that any one else in the house was going, was a sort of reflected enjoyment, and conjured up a lively anticipation of the scene. "I remember a Miss D., a maiden lady from Wales . . . tantalized me greatly in this way, by talking all day of going to see Mrs. Siddons's 'airs and graces' at night in some favourite part; . . . and how anxious and uneasy I became, lest she and her companion should not be in time to get good places — lest the curtain should draw before they arrived — and lest I should lose one line or look in the intelligent report which I should hear the next morning."† — The firstlings of life are most precious, muses the authoress of "Dead Sea Fruit," when enumerating some of the things, and these the most beautiful of all things, which can never be renewed: the bloom on a butterfly's wing; the morning dew on a new-blown rose; our first view of the ocean; our first pantomime, "when all the fairies were fairies for ever, and when the imprudent consumption of the contents of a pewter quart measure in sight of the stage-box could not disenchant us with that elfin creature, Harlequin the

graceful, faithful betrothed of Columbine the fair."\*

Let us watch young Alexander Oldworthy, in Mr. Charles Reade's novelet, making his way to town from Coventry by coach, more than a century ago; reaching London at four, at five he is in his first theatre. That sense of the beautiful, which belongs to genius, we read, makes him see beauty in the semicircular sweep of the glowing boxes; in gilt ornaments glorious with light, and, above all, in human beings gaily dressed, and radiant with expectation. "And all these things are beautiful; only gross, rustic senses cannot see it, and blunted town senses can see it no longer.

"Before the play began, music attached him on another side; and all combined with youth and novelty to raise him to a high key of intellectual enjoyment, and when the ample curtain rose slowly and majestically upon Mr. Otway's tragedy of 'Venice Preserved,' it was an era in this young life. — Poetry rose from the dead before his eyes this night. She lay no longer entombed in print. She floated around the scene, ethereal, but palpable. She breathed and burned in heroic shapes, and godlike tones, and looks of fire."†

So with Lord Lytton's *Viola*, when that young Italian is first taken by the Cardinal to his own box at the Opera. "Oh, how gloriously that life of the stage — that fairy world of music and song, dawned upon her! It was the only world that seemed to correspond with her strange childish thoughts. . . . Beautiful and true enthusiasm, rich with the promise of genius! Boy or man, thou wilt never be a poet, if thou hast not felt the ideal, the romance, the Calypso's isle that opened to thee, when for the first time the magic curtain was drawn aside, and let in the World of Poetry on the World of Prose!"‡

First impressions at the play — this is a theme fiction loves to handle. Scott gives us young Roland Graeme at a village show — where the actors have but a greensward plot for a stage, and a hawthorn-bush for a green-room and tiring-house. But "as for the page, to whom the very idea of such an exhibition, simple as it was, was entirely new, he beheld it with the undiminished and ecstatic delight with which men of all ranks look for the first time on dramatic representations, and laughed, shouted, and clapped his hands as the performance proceeded."§ Nigel Olifaunt, again, is initiated

\* John Marchmont's *Legacy*, ch. xxxiv.

† Art.: a Dramatic Tale, by Charles Reade.

‡ Zanoni, ch. I.

§ The Abbot, ch. xxvii.

\* Dutch Pictures, ch. xx., First Fruits.

† Hazlitt's essay on the Letter-bell.

by Dalgarno into the privileges of London play-going, with this result — the play being Shakespeare's Richard III., and Burbage playing the King: "He felt all the magic of that sorcerer, who had displayed, within the paltry circle of a wooden booth, the long wars of York and Lancaster" — and when the Battle of Bosworth was over, so strongly were the ideas of reality and deception contending in young Nigel's imagination, that it was only with an effort he could overcome the illusion, "so strange did the proposal at first sound, when his companion declared King Richard should sup with them at the Mermaid."\* — Professor Wilson gives us Margaret Lyndsay coaxed by her gay young sailor-swain into going to see the "Tragedy of Douglas." "The house was a full one; and, before the curtain drew up, Margaret thought herself in a splendid dream. The lights — the music — the ladies in the boxes — the whole spirit of the place — so totally at variance with the small quiet room she had just left — all held her in a delighted delusion; and she scarcely thought herself in this world."† — Many and many a time had Moir's Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith, heard talk of play-acting, and of players making themselves kings and queens, and saying a great many wonderful things; but never had he had an opportunity of making himself a witness to the truth of these hearsays, until, in middle life, Maister Glen induced him to go and see the strollers, at a shilling a-head, in Laird Wheatley's barn — determined to run the risk of Maister Wiggie, his minister's rebuke, for the transgression, hoping it would make no lasting impression on his mind, being for the first and only time. "Never, while I live and breathe, will I forget what we saw and heard that night; it just looks to me, by all the world, when I think on it, like a fairy dream." Even the orchestra enraptured him — consisting of two blind fiddlers, who played the bonniest ye ever heard. Wow, but the very music was worth a sixpence of itself.‡ For a parallel passage, take an excerpt from the souvenirs of Mr. Slick of Slickville: "Well, I never was to a theatre afore in all my life, for minister didn't approbate them at no rate, and he wouldn't never let me go to 'em to Slickville. . . . Well, I must say it was a splendid sight, too. The house was chock full of company, all drest out to the very nines, and the lamps was as bright as day, and the music

was splendid, that's a fact, for it was the black band of the militia (and them blacks have most elegant ears for music too, I tell you). . . . But what gave me the gapes was the scenes. . . . When the curtain drew up, there was Genesee Falls as nat'ral as life, and the beautiful four-story grist-mills taken off as plain as anything. . . . It was all but rael, it was so like life. The action, too, was equal to the scenes; it was dreadful pretty, I do assure you."\* — Theodore Hook has tried to depict, in the case of Welsted, the effect produced upon a well-informed and cultivated mind, sensitively alive to all the charms which simultaneously assailed him, by his first introduction to the interior of any theatre: how his breath stopped, and an exclamation not the most pious escaped him; how agonised he felt that even a breath should disturb the harmony with which his ears were filled; and, in fine, how when he fairly beheld the sea of heads about him, the glittering stage and all its gay accompaniments, he "actually sank on one of the benches, completely overpowered by his feelings."† The sight must have been too ridiculous for any *blasé* man about town, present there and then. Not but that the used-up *habitué* often eyes with envy the enthusiasm of inexperience at its first play. Colonel Hamley describes such an instance, where Fane is pictured at the strollers' exhibition, watching the audience, and musing on days gone by. "Cheerfulness and expectation prevailed; but the person among all the audience, whose feelings Fane envied most, was a sharp-looking little boy, in a red frock with black specks on it, and a magnificent feathered hat, who came in with his papa and brothers, and, being placed on his feet in the front row, gazed round him with intense delight. Fane remembered that the last time he had been in such a place he was about that age and size, and he knew that the scene was, to that little boy, the most charming spot on earth; that he had dreamt of it for two or three previous nights at least — that the smell of the footlights was a sweet savour in his nostrils, the noise in the gallery solemn music in his ears — the whole place paradise — and that he would watch the progress of the drama with breathless interest, and most uncriticising faith." There was an elder brother of his, too, it is added, who appeared, probably for the first time in his life, in Wellington boots and a shirt-collar, to his great pride and discomfort, and Fane guessed with consider-

\* Fortunes of Nigel, ch. xii.

† Tri Is of Margaret Lyndsay, ch. xv.

‡ Mansie Wauch, ch. xvii.

\* The Clockmaker, Third Series, ch. iii.

† Passion and Principle, ch. vi.

able correctness that this youth would conceive an ardent and respectful passion for the lady who did Lydia Languish.\* — It is Covent Garden Theatre that young David Copperfield chooses, when resolved to go to the play, on his stay in town at the Golden Cross, where all along he is so painfully conscious of his youth; and from the back of a centre box he sees Julius Caesar and the new Pantomime. The mingled reality and mystery of the whole show — as David describes his sensations — the influence upon him of the poetry, the lights, the music, the company, the smooth stupendous changes of glittering and brilliant scenery, were so dazzling, and opened up such illimitable regions of delight, that when he came out into the rainy street, at midnight, he felt as if he had come from the clouds, where he had been leading a romantic life for ages, to a bawling, splashing, link-lighted, umbrella-struggling, hackney-coach-jostling, patten-clinking, muddy, miserable world.

But anon, when David is in the coffee-room of the Golden Cross, there enters Steerforth, who, the first greeting over, mentions that he has been "dozing and grumbling away at the play" that evening. "I have been at the play, too," says David. "At Covent Garden. What a delightful and magnificent entertainment, Steerforth!" Steerforth laughs heartily at this effusion, claps Davy on the back, calls him the freshest of daisies, and explains, "I have been at Covent Garden too, and there never was a more miserable business."† How soon, in nearly all of us, the Copperfield state of feeling merges in the Steerforth — and the glamour of illusions fades into the light of common day! In nearly all; for there occurs an exception, now and then, of the rare type exemplified in such a veteran as Mr. Fitzball — witness his "Thirty-five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life," of which, a quarterly reviewer observed, at the time of publication, that the author had still a childlike faith in the illusions of the stage, and wrote of them as if they were substantial verities. The best companion at a theatre, according to this critic, for all persons who have passed the age of belief, and entered upon that of doubt, is a novice in such matters, more especially if the novice be a schoolboy or a girl. "Then on the features of the uncritical spectator are reflected, as in a mirror, the emotions of wonder, sympathy, or mirth, which it is the privilege of acting to awaken, but which so soon vanish with use and repe-

tition. Time seems, however, to have dealt more leniently with our author in this respect, and he writes with the profound earnestness of a lad in his teens of the magic wonders effected by a few yards of painted canvas, pulleys, ropes, gauzes, and gaslight." The child, it was added, in his case, had not been the father of the man, so much as the father of a series of children, all willing to be pleased, all overflowing with marvel, faith, and sympathy. — In salient contrast with him stands the instance of Theodore Hook, whose biographer directs attention to the remarkable revulsion of feeling which he manifested in after-life, as regards everything connected with his former pursuits, or which smelt of the stage lamps.

Swift says — or Pope\* — "When I was young, I thought all the world, as well as myself, was wholly taken up in discoursing upon the last new play." When I was young — ah, woe! when! Ere I was old — ah, woe! ere! Disenchantment seems specially to wait with time on the enchantments of the stage.

As our judgment ripens, our imagination decays. We cannot, as Macaulay puts it, at once enjoy the flowers of the spring of life, and the fruits of the autumn, the pleasures of close investigation and those of agreeable error. "We cannot sit at once in the front of the stage and behind the scenes. We cannot be under the illusion of the spectacle, while we are watching the movements of the ropes and pulleys which dispose it."† When habit has blunted the earliest sensations of pleasure, the theatre nevertheless continues to be, in Scott's estimate, the favourite resort of the youth, who, though he recognises no longer the enchanted palace of his childhood, enjoys the more sober pleasure of becoming acquainted with the higher energies of human passion, the recondite intricacies and complications of human temper and disposition.‡ But the disenchantment of the first sensation becomes more and more complete. "En entrant au bal masqué, tout paraît nouveau; mais il vient un moment où l'on peut dire à toute cette bigarrure: *Beau masque, je te connais!*"§ And so the inevitable moment comes when middle age says the same thing to the illusions of the stage. Mr. Thackeray describes himself, when watching the delight of boy-

\* In the "Thoughts on Various Subjects," to which both contributed, without assigned distinction of author-ship.

† Miscellanies by Lord Macaulay; John Dryden.

‡ Scott's Miscellaneous Prose Works: Life of Kemble.

§ Maximes de M. de Sainte-Beuve (in imitation of La Rochefoucauld).

\* Lady Lee's Widowhood, ch. xlix.

† David Copperfield, ch. xix.

hood at a first, or a paulo-post-primary play, as resembling that *bon vivant* who envied the beggars staring into the cook-shop windows, and wishing he could be hungry: "I envied the boys, and wished I could laugh, very much" \* In one of his books of travel, having to describe the Golden Horn, Michael Angelo Titmarsh draws a characteristic simile from Drury Lane, such as we used to see it in our youth, he says, when to our sight the grand last pictures of the melodrama or pantomime were as magnificent as any objects of nature we have seen with maturer eyes—when fancy had all the bloom on her—when all the heroines who danced before the scene appeared as ravishing beauties, when there shone an unearthly splendour about Baker and Diddear—"and the sound of the bugles and fiddles, and the cheerful clang of the cymbals, as the scene unrolled, and the gorgeous procession meandered triumphantly through it, caused a thrill of pleasure, and awakened an innocent fulness of sensual enjoyment that is only given to boys." † Lives there the man with soul so dead, the same author elsewhere exclaims,—the being ever so *blasé* and travel-worn, who does not feel some shock and thrill even yet, just at that moment when "the bell (the dear and familiar bell of your youth) begins to tingle, and the curtain to rise, and the large shoes and ankles, the flesh-coloured leggings, the crumpled knees, the gorgeous robes and masks" are all revealed, of the actors ranged on the stage to shout the opening chorus? ‡ Simple-hearted Colonel Newcome takes his nephews and nieces to Astley's—all children together—and laughs delighted at Mr. Merryman's jokes in the ring; and beholds the Battle of Waterloo with breathless interest. "As for Clive, he was in these matters much older than the grizzled old warrior, his father." § From Roundabout Papers and the like, how many more such illustrations might be cited, of the same author's very own! So might there be from the fictions and essays first and last of Lord Lytton. In the manner, for example, of his reflections in an early chapter of "Godolphin," on that hero's early susceptibility to the fascinations of the stage: "And oh! while yet we are young—while yet the dew lingers on the green leaf of spring... how deep and rich a transport it is to see, to feel, to hear Shakspeare's conceptions made *actual*, though all imperfectly, and only for an hour!" || And then in the

manner of this bit of colloquy in a late chapter of the same book. "And the theatre—are you fond of it still?" "I still like it passably," answered Godolphin, "but the gloss is gone from the delusion. I am grown mournfully fastidious. I must have excellent acting—an excellent play. A slight fault—a slight deviation from nature—robs me of my content at the whole." \*

As absolute in many cases is the sense of disenchantment as with Lysander's regard for Hermia, which, says he,

Melted as doth the snow, seems to me now  
As the remembrance of an idle gawd,  
Which in my childhood I did dote upon. †

### THE TWO VILLAGES.

OVER the river, on the hill,  
Lieth a village white and still;  
All around it the forest-trees  
Shiver and whisper in the breeze;  
Over it sailing shadows go  
Of soaring hawk and screaming crow,  
And mountain grasses, low and sweet,  
Grow in the middle of every street.

Over the river under the hill,  
Another village lieth still;  
There I see in the cloudy night  
Twinkling stars of household light,  
Fires that gleam from the smithy's door,  
Mists that curl on the river-shore;  
And in the roads no grasses grow,  
For the wheels that hasten to and fro.

In that village on the hill  
Never is sound of smithy or mill;  
The houses are thatched with grass and flowers,  
Never a clock to toll the hours;  
The marble doors are always shut,  
You cannot enter in hall or hut;  
All the villagers lie asleep;  
Never again to sow or reap;  
Never in dreams to moan or sigh;  
Silent, and idle, and few they lie.

In that village under the hill,  
When the night is starry and still,  
Many a weary soul in prayer  
Looks to the other village there,  
And weeping and sighing, longs to go,  
Up to that home from this below;  
Longs to sleep in the forest wild,  
Whither have vanished wife and child,  
And hearing, praying, this answer fall:  
"Patience! that village shall hold ye all!"

\* Thackeray's *Miscellaneous*, II. 349.

† *A Journey to Cairo*, ch. vii.

‡ *Sketches and Travels* in London.

§ *The Newcomes*, ch. xvi.

|| *Godolphin*, ch. viii.

\* *Ibid.*, ch. III.

† *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act IV. Sc. 1.



## CHAPTER XI.

## MADÉMOISELLE FÉLIE'S HUSBAND.

THE "fortnight" which Monsieur de Vêrancour had begged from De Champmorin's notary was past, and another week added to it, and still there was no news of the money, and the suspense endured by the unfortunate Vicomte was becoming intolerable; and various slight signs were here and there appearing of Mademoiselle Félicie's matrimonial defeat being likely to stand revealed to the general public. It was really beyond bearing! And the worst of it was, that it was impossible not to be grateful to poor, good, patiently-toiling Monsieur Richard for the manifest trouble he was taking. He never totally deprived the sorely perplexed father of hope, never announced to him the failure of his negotiations, or put himself in the position of a man who had done his utmost and could do no more; but, on the contrary, played with his solicitor after the most tantalising fashion, and was for ever showing him a chance of the attainment of their ends. Their ends!—for of his zeal in the cause of the family, Monsieur Richard left no doubt. And the Vicomte felt it was the "family," the house of Vêrancour, which was being served;—and that was as it should be. It would have been presumptuous in Monsieur Richard to have tried to render a service to the Vicomte, out of personal friendship; whereas, besides being convenient; it was creditable to a man like Richard Prévost to wish so ardently to serve the interests of an illustrious race. And from the point of view of "ma maison," as Monsieur le Vicomte would perpetually repeat to himself, it was gratifying to observe the plebeian's devotion, while it did away with the necessity for any personal gratitude, which was also pleasing.

Such was Monsieur Richard's desire to obtain for his noble patron the sum required for the establishment of Mademoiselle Félicie, that he was for ever acquainting him with some new plan that his untiring ingenuity had devised, and that must be certain to succeed;—only just in the teeth of this "certainty," something of the most impossible kind invariably occurred which dashed all the seemingly so well-founded hopes to the ground. There was only one simple operation that Monsieur Richard never proposed; and that was to dispose of any securities of his own at a great loss, and bring the proceeds to the Vicomte. No! it was always a question of "raising" the money from some one else, and in this transaction Monsieur

Richard was doomed to perpetual disappointment. As to buying the "Grandes Bruyères," as his uncle had been ready to do, that was utterly out of the question. Monsieur Richard had no ready money; everything was absorbed by this purchase of the Châteaubréville estate.

"It is a very heavy responsibility," said Monsieur Richard, one evening when he was sitting with the family at the Château, round the smouldering fire, "a very heavy responsibility;" and he sighed, and ventured to take up Vêvette's scissors from the table and examine them attentively.

Monsieur de Vêrancour placed his two hands on his knees, bending forwards, and looking intently at the toes of his thick boots. "Well!" rejoined he, with a kind of grunt, "I confess it passes me to make out why you have done it. I should call it a terrible imprudence. To go and saddle yourself with land,—with a very considerable landed property indeed!—when nothing obliges you to do so. I confess that goes beyond me;" and the Vicomte threw himself back in his chair as if he gave the problem up in despair. "That we," continued he, after a momentary pause, "should go on impoverishing ourselves to keep up old historic memories, and prevent the glorious sound of old names from being lost in the horrid roar of Revolutions,—that is comprehensible; it is one of the many sacrifices to which our noblesse obliges us. And how many are there of us who can do it, even? Not one in a hundred. We, who are identical with the soil, we are forced to sell it."

"Perhaps," suggested timidly Monsieur Richard, "perhaps that is why we buy it."

But the Vicomte did not seem at all impressed by the force of this argument; for, unheeding the interruption, he continued, "You people of the new school, you nouveaux riches, are so completely free! Nothing trammels or binds you. You can absolutely do whatever you choose; you have nothing to keep up—no traditions, no names, no ancestors who have a right to expect from you the sacrifice of all mere worldly advantages to the respect for their dignity. We are trammelled, fettered, chained down on all sides, whilst you are free as air. And yet you are always seeking to forge some chain for yourselves. Land, forsooth! land! that it is with which you nouveaux riches are always burdening yourselves."

"It is possible," edged in meekly Monsieur Richard, "that we may wish to found something."

"Found what?" exclaimed the Vicomte,

with truly superb disdain. "It takes ages to found an order in the state. Nobody founded us. We were! What was the use of putting us down? Found, indeed! I should like to know what the men of to-day, the men without names, can found?"

"Not an old nobility, certainly," replied Monsieur Richard gently, and with a smile, "but perhaps a new aristocracy."

"Whew!" half whistled Monsieur de Vêrancour, with a supremely contemptuous curl of the lip. "That takes four generations at least, and heaps of money!" And, getting up and standing with his back to the fire, he continued, "Why, now, look at what you're doing. When you've bought and paid for the Châteaubréville property, you'll have to put it in order, and restore the house, — it's shockingly out of repair, — and furnish it."

"There's a great deal of splendid old furniture in it," interrupted Richard Prévost.

"Yes; but old — very old," retorted the Vicomte; "out of keeping with the habits of modern" — he seemed at a loss for a proper term, "of modern" — he hesitated again.

"You mean out of keeping with the habits of la petite bourgeoisie," said Richard, coming to his assistance. "But, Monsieur le Vicomte," added he, "I intend to furnish, and I hope keep up Châteaubréville on a scale not quite unfitting the importance of the place."

"The deuce you do, my dear fellow. Why, then, you'll not be able to do it under a hundred thousand francs a year."

"I do not count upon doing it for so little," answered humbly Monsieur Richard.

"Peste!" ejaculated Monsieur de Vêrancour, and the look which accompanied the expression seemed to say, "Where have these canaille stolen all this gold?"

A hundred thousand francs of income! Oh, the magic of those few words! Mademoiselle Félicie let her tapestry drop upon her lap, and surveyed poor Monsieur Richard from under her eyelids with such a strange look, but a gracious one decidedly.

"Diable!" pursued the Vicomte. "Well, then, you may make a marriage, — a good marriage; it will be in your power to marry a well-born girl without a fortune."

"If you would help — would guide me," murmured Richard.

"I know of none such," retorted the Vicomte haughtily; "but I know that in Paris, for instance, there are plenty of reduced families who will give their daughters to anybody who is rich. It is quite a thing of the present day, quite a new thing in

France. It has been for nearly two centuries the practice to renovate the lustre of ancient names by marrying the eldest sons of illustrious houses to large fortunes embodied in base-born girls. There you have the 'savonnette a vilain' of the Regency and of Louis XV., but it is only recently that nobly-born girls have been sacrificed to become the mothers of shopkeepers. However, so it is now, and certain it is that money can do anything. Therefore, my dear Monsieur Richard, as I said before, if you have a hundred thousand francs a year to spend, I do not see why you should not marry a wife whom the ladies of the province should visit."

Monsieur Richard bowed low and deferentially, as though he felt the full value of the announcement made to him, and nothing in his manner indicated that he was other than flattered by the Vicomte's behaviour; for, in truth, the Vicomte meant to be particularly kind, affable, and condescending, patronising, nay, — even paternal.

Mademoiselle Félicie, by reason of the thirty years' difference of age between herself and her father, saw things in a slightly different light, and was just capable of understanding that Monsieur Richard might be anything but flattered by her parent's naïvely contemptuous familiarity; and when their visitor rose to go, she proceeded to a small side-table in the half-lighted drawing-room and asked him if he would not take a glass of eau sucrée. Upon his acceptance of that favour, she mixed the harmless beverage for him herself, tendered it to him, and as she did so, allowed her white hand unconsciously to touch his, lingered for a few seconds ere she relinquished her hold upon the glass, and with a perfectly angelic look asked Monsieur Richard if he were quite sure there was sugar enough in the water.

And then another week went by, and it seemed somehow or other to be becoming known that Mademoiselle Félicie would not marry Monsieur de Champmorin. How it had transpired, no one could say; but it was thought to be traceable to the Champmorin notary, who in moments of effusion and confidential talk with trusted friends, had discoursed upon the impossibility of girls marrying without money, and had unguardedly alluded to his client as "much to be pitied" — insinuating, as it were, that Mademoiselle Félicie, — having been fallen in love with, unprovided as she was with any dot, — could not be held altogether blameless.

Richard Prévost abstained for three days from going near the Château. On the fourth Monsieur de Vêrancour sought him.

Monsieur Richard was warming himself before a huge, blazing fire in his study, when a loud ring was heard at the door bell, a loud footstep quickly followed it in the hall, and dispensing with Madame Jean's attendance, Monsieur le Vicomte opened the door for himself, and stalked into the room.

"Well, there it is at last!" he exclaimed, throwing himself into a chair and letting his brown felt hat drop on the floor beside him. "I always thought it would come to this with all these confounded delays; and now there it is! S—mille tonnerres de Dieu!" And all those good principles which were to keep this "right-thinking" *fil des croisés* from swearing, flew to the winds, and he indulged in the comfort of a string of oaths, as if he had been no more than one of those long-forgotten Saulnier forefathers of his, picking up salt in the Breton marshes.

"I beseech of you," entreated Monsieur Richard, rising, "do not give up hope. I have, on the contrary, good news. I should have gone to see you last evening if the weather had not been so bad and my cough troublesome, but I was going down to the Château now. I have a letter from an old friend of my poor uncle's in Nantes, and I am positively not without hopes that perhaps even a sale of Les Grandes Bruyères might be possible. Here, I will read you the letter. I got it yesterday." And Monsieur Richard began busily throwing over the letters and papers before him.

"The devil take your letter!" stormed the Vicomte; "what do all the letters in the world matter now? Why, Champmorin refuses!" And striding up to the table, Monsieur de Vêrancour brought down his hand upon it with a heavy thump, and the two men looked each other in the face.

"Re—fu—ses!" stammered out Richard Prévost. "Oh! Monsieur le Vicomte, I am constrained to say I cannot master the sense of those words. Monsieur de Champmorin refuses the honour of being the husband of Mademoiselle de Vêrancour!"

The exasperated parent was somewhat mollified at sight of Monsieur Richard's indignation. "Read that," said he, handing over a letter to him.

Monsieur Richard did read, and was seemingly overpowered by what he read, for his countenance was thoroughly what his countrymen term "bouleversé" when he returned the paper to its owner.

"You will admit," observed the latter, "that nothing is left for me to do. It is as complete a congé as can well be given, and, moreover, couched in such respectful and

mournful terms that probably public opinion would expect me to condole with the writer."

Richard Prévost took the letter back into his hand, pored over it anew, and then replied with an air and in a tone of supreme depression.

"No!" he sighed, as though vanquished by fate, "there is nothing left to do, — nothing!"

Monsieur de Vêrancour sprang from his seat, and paced up and down the room. "Nothing!" echoed he, with stentorian lungs; "that is exactly what drives me mad! I feel ready to shoot myself because I have no earthly pretext for shooting Champmorin!"

"Good God!" exclaimed Richard Prévost in a tone of downright agony, "to think of such a thing! A demoiselle de Vêrancour refused by a mere country gentleman! Refused! Such a person as Mademoiselle Félicie! — such birth and position! — such a name!"

The Vicomte went on pacing up and down and muttering, and Monsieur Richard went on watching him without being noticed.

"One thing must at all events be seen to," ejaculated Richard, as though struck by a sudden inspiration. "The whole must be kept secret; it must never be known that" —

"Not known!" thundered the Vicomte. "Well, my good sir, one sees what it is to live out of the world as you do! Why, it is known already. Everybody knows it. It was known before it was true! These things always are!"

"So that," groaned Monsieur Richard, "it will be public throughout the province that Mademoiselle Félicie — Ma-de-moiselle Félicie," — and he weighed on every syllable solemnly, — "will have been given up, discarded, refused! It is too dreadful!" "Can nothing be done?" recommenced Monsieur Richard, with a kind of timid eagerness, after a silence of a few moments.

"What?" rejoined Monsieur de Vêrancour.

"Indeed, it is hard to say," rejoined the other sadly; "but surely it would be possible to find some remedy. Anything would be preferable to the present position."

"I should think it would, indeed!" retorted bitterly Monsieur de Vêrancour.

"Well, but" — suggested hesitatingly Monsieur Richard, "could no other parti be found?"

"Where?" cried the Vicomte. "Do you fancy, my worthy Monsieur Richard,

that husbands for discarded young ladies are to be found by beating the woods for them, and that they come as snakes do when they smell the catcher's pot of boiling milk? \* No, thank you! No dot, no husband! Where is there one anywhere round? Look through the department. Why, there's not even an old invalid, wanting a nurse, — not even a *mésalliance* to be got!"

Monsieur Richard fell to musing, and the Vicomte went on walking up and down, but he did seem comforted by the talk he was having. "Monsieur le Vicomte," at length said, in a low and unsteady tone, Richard Prévost; "there is a *mésalliance*, if Mademoiselle Félicie would consent to that. I know of one — a very — an extremely rich parti."

"The devil you do!" broke in Monsieur de Vércancour, stopping short in his walk. "Where is he to be found? Who is he?" Richard Prévost was pale as a ghost, so pale that the edge of his eyelids seemed quite pink, as he looked hesitatingly at his interlocutor. "Well!" exclaimed the latter, "where is he? who is he?"

"It is me, myself!" gasped out Monsieur Richard, under his breath. The stare of blank astonishment with amusement mixed, with which his proposal was met, was not likely to be ever forgotten by the unlucky suitor, whose white face turned scarlet with shame.

"You?" echoed Monsieur de Vércancour. "You?" And then struggling with the strong sense of the ridiculous, "You?" he shouted a third time. The apparent fun of the thing fairly mastered him, and he roared with laughter, as he threw himself into the nearest chair, and held his sides.

The Vicomte's fit of hilarity lasted long enough for Monsieur Richard to determine upon what attitude he should assume. He assumed one of injured dignity, and reminded his hearer, when he was able to attend to him, that he was exceedingly rich, and that his offer was a proof of his devotion to the house of Vércancour.

Conversation was not easy after this incident, and so the Vicomte soon prepared to take his leave. When he did so, he held out his hand to Monsieur Richard, and spoke again to his young friend with his features not yet quit of the laugh that had convulsed them. "There shall be no *raucour* about it!" said he, with jovial graciousness. "I am sure you meant it well, but you know it really was too droll. I ought

to apologise for laughing so immoderately, but, on my honour, it was irresistible. However, I shan't forget the intention, and, I assure you, you have done me good; it has been quite a distraction." And, with a good-humoured shake of the hand, he left the room and the house, and once in the street, had another laugh to himself.

Whether Monsieur de Vércancour would have altogether liked the look with which Monsieur Richard followed him when his back was turned, is another question.

## CHAPTER XII.

### RAOUL'S DISTRESS.

JUST before the end of October a little incident had occurred which had frightened D—— "from its propriety," and afforded the old cronies of the place an opportunity for declaring that the end of the world was coming. It had become known that Monsieur Léon Duprez, that most magnificent "cock of the walk," whose example, said the elders, was so disastrous for the younger generation, had sailed for Australia, under a feigned name, thus escaping at once from his debtors and his admiring townfolk, from his colleagues on various Boards, and from Madame Josephine Le Vaillant, the wife of the Juge de Paix. Naturally this was "an événement," and, what with one thing and another, the little town of D—— did appear to be aping its betters, and losing all right to be denominated a "quiet retreat."

In the course of time, — that is, towards the first days of November, — what are termed "proceedings" were taken against Monsieur Duprez's property, and his house and furniture were to be put up for sale; though the reports of what his debts in Paris amounted to made any price that might be reached by the disposal of his paternal estate seem a mere "drop in the ocean."

All this really was very agitating for the public mind of D——. Here, in less than a month, had there been a murder, a financial break-up, — or, as the commentators delighted to call it, a "scandal," — and a matrimonial alliance broken off!

In the midst of such exciting events the fact that Raoul de Morville was going up to Paris to be a clerk in the Marine Ministry, passed unnoticed. And, above all, it entered no one's head that there could be any possible connection between his acceptance of official drudgery in a subordinate position and the ruin of the some-time cock

\* In Poitou it is a trade to catch snakes, and the catchers attract them by boiling milk.

of the walk who had been his intimate friend.

Old Morville spoke but little with his neighbours, but to the few whom he met he grunted out the announcement of his son's approaching departure, and received a most humiliating meed of pity in exchange; for, being universally disliked, pity seemed the natural vexation to inflict upon him, and he got plenty of it.

Raoul came to say good-bye to his friends at the Château, and found the Vicomte together with his two daughters.

"I'm sincerely rejoiced you came to-day instead of to-morrow," said Monsieur de Vêrancour.

"I go to-morrow," interrupted Raoul.

"If you would let me finish, I meant to say that to-morrow you would have found no one here," continued the Vicomte; "for we have to drive over to the Grandes Bruyères, and shall be away the whole day, and I would not have missed seeing you for a great deal, mon garçon. I shall always feel a real interest in you, for you put us all in mind of happier times, — of the times when your mother and theirs," — pointing to his daughters, — "were both alive. I shall be heartily glad to hear of your well-doing, and of your advancement."

At the moment when Monsieur de Vêrancour had mentioned the journey of the next day to the Grandes Bruyères, a glance, quick as lightning, was exchanged between Raoul and Vêvette, who was seated somewhat behind her father. It was only the work of one second, for the girl lowered her eyes instantly to her work, and blushed crimson.

The leave-taking, when it came, was an affectionate one, and while the two young ladies shook hands cordially with their parting guest, the Vicomte embraced him with genuine tenderness, and specially enjoined upon him to write to them from Paris.

It is, probably, needless to inform my readers that, the next day, only Félicie accompanied her father upon the projected excursion. Vêvette discovered an excuse for remaining at home, and at home she stayed, and was virtually alone in the house. Céleste, the all-pervading functionary, was at all times too glad not to be summoned from her lawful dominions in the vast subterranean kitchens of the once grand old dwelling, and from her Vêvette knew she was safe. Baptiste, the "man of all work," was absent with the carriage, and had put on his old livery to look like a coachman; his wife, old Suzette, who was the most dangerous person of the lot, was weeding in the

garden, and doing some work set out for her by her spouse in the artichoke beds. She was not to be got rid of, or eluded; that Vêvette well knew, for Suzette was a lynx-eyed old woman, and, moreover, her employment fixed her right opposite the pavilion. Nothing was left for it then but to receive Raoul inside the house. It was for the last time, and Vêvette, after a great deal of discussion with herself, and with much of what she believed to be resistance, yielded.

Raoul waited behind some trees just outside the garden wall to the south, — in a spot which no one ever passed. About three o'clock Vêvette came, and gave him a signal; he climbed the wall, followed the girl silently, and in a few seconds was alone with her in the usual sitting-room of the family.

Mute and mournful were the first greetings of the pair; but, in the midst of what was the natural grief attendant on their parting, it seemed as though some other trouble lay hidden, and each marked this in the other. As Raoul held in his the hand of the shrinking girl, "Vêvette," he exclaimed, bitterly, "why do you shrink from me in this way? what is it you shrink from?" Vêvette cast an anxious glance around her. Raoul shook his head: "It is not that!" he said impatiently. "You are not alarmed lest we should be surprised; you know that no one will come near this room for hours; that we are perfectly safe; that there are half-a-dozen ways of escaping if one heard but a mouse stir. No; that is not it. I am not deceived by the look that you send wandering out from your eyes all around us, for I see the look that lies behind it. What is it, Vêvette? what is it? Sometimes it seems to me as though there were a phantom, a dreadful something, that would always rise up between us, even when we are man and wife." And he tried to draw her close to him, but she still shrank and trembled. "Vêvette!" he urged in a softer tone, pressing her hand in both his own. "I am going. We may not meet for months. It is the last time we can speak together, the very last time; I have but one hope, but one comfort in the world, — your love. Do you look upon your promise to me as a sacred one?"

A faint "Yes," escaped her lips.

"Do you count upon mine to you as absolutely as though I had solemnly pledged you my faith at the altar?"

This time the girl looked up, and looked straight and unabashed into her lover's eyes, as she answered distinctly, "Oh! that indeed I do."

"Then, Vêvette, my own love," he re-



joined, throwing his arms impetuously round her, "what can it be that you fear? For God's sake, tell me. Do not let me go with this weight upon my heart. What is it that you dread, my wife, my surely to be wedded wife?"

"Oh! Raoul! Raoul!" cried she, burying her face in her hands, "the sin! the sin! the fault that must not be forgiven,—the sin that will never leave us!"

He partially loosened his hold of her, and whilst one arm encircled her waist, he sought with the other to draw her hands from her burning cheeks. "Vévette," he said, in a tone that was almost stern; "you are wanting in respect to yourself, wanting in respect to my wife, whom I have worshipped as a saint. What sin have you ever committed, Vévette? Your own scrupulousness is less pure than greater ignorance would be. I know where the fault lies;—in the teachings of your convent; in the gloomy, narrow, false, impious teachings of people who do not know that true love is bright, strong, and pure as steel or flame. Answer me, dear; is marriage an Institution, sanctified by the Church? Is the marriage vow blessed? Is marriage a sacrament?"

"Of course it is," murmured she, with downcast eyes.

"And you believe that when girls give themselves away in marriage to husbands who are at least totally indifferent to them, the bond is a holy one, and the wives are blessed among women! Do you ever ask yourself, Vévette, why some wives are faithless?"

"Because they are tempted by the Evil One," said Vévette, timidly.

"No, my sweet one," continued Raoul, looking tenderly at her and softly stroking her hair. "It is because they do not love their husbands, and that it is dangerous to ask from the weak creatures that we are more than is humanly possible.

"But, Raoul," hesitatingly whispered she, "it is wrong;—the Church forbids it."

"God does not forbid it," answered he, gravely. "His Word nowhere forbids it. Suppose, my own, we were married this very day, would it still be wrong that you should love me?"

Poor Vévette trembled, and blushed, and looked the very picture of distress and confusion, as she attempted to reply. "Yes, dear Raoul," stammered she, "it would always be wrong. It is a sin,—a dreadful sin,—and God will punish us. It is a dreadful sin for a woman to love her hus-

band even, as—as—I—love you!" she faintly uttered at last.

Raoul folded her gently, almost paternally, to his breast. "Poor child!" he said in a very mournful tone; "and so, it is not the circumstances of the love, not its concealment, not the momentary untruth,—no! it is the love itself which is the sin! poor little one!" And he remained silent and thoughtful for some time, with Vévette's head lying upon his shoulder and his own head resting upon her brow.

More than an hour went by, and young Morville tried to make his future bride comprehend her duties to him and to herself, and he succeeded in so far as that she agreed to subordinate all other considerations to her passionate devotion for him; but that the devotion itself was sinful,—that being passionate it must be so,—that remained ineradicable from poor little Vévette's creed.

"And now, Raoul," pleaded the girl in her turn, as the moment for separation came, "what is the trouble that is hanging over you;—for there is one. You have some other care besides the mere grief, deep as it is, of leaving. May I not know it?" she added, looking up imploringly at him.

A cloud darkened Raoul's countenance, he pressed his lips together, and drew a long hard breath. "No!" was his rejoinder. "I cannot share that trouble with you, Vévette."

"Then you have a trouble?" she retorted, eagerly.

"Most men have; and there are many that must be borne in solitude and silence. Some burdens may be shared by those we love; but some there are that it is not good to halve, even with one's wife." The tone in which this was spoken left no room for further entreaty, and threw a deeper chill over the final parting of the lovers than either could have anticipated.

In the sense of utter loneliness which fell upon Vévette when Raoul was gone, there was something mixed which she could not define; a sort of shadow which prevented the absolute blank. "Had Raoul a secret? what was it?" that thought occupied her.

Scarcely had he left the room through the window opening on the terrace, when a knock came at the door. Vévette started, and bade the visitor enter, with a beating heart and quivering voice. It was *Mère Jubine's* Louison with a letter in her hand. She tendered it to Vévette with a curtsy, saying it was from *Monsieur Richard Pré-vost*. When opened it was found to contain another letter, addressed to *Félicie*, and a

few lines by which the younger sister was humbly requested to deliver the enclosure to the elder. It concerned, observed the writer, "an act of charity!"

"Is Monsieur Richard ill?" asked Vévette. The girl said she did not know, but did not think he was particularly strong in this damp weather, but that she had promised to deliver the letter. And then she went away.

Vévette, in her natural simplicity and her present agitation of spirit, did perhaps think it rather odd that Monsieur Richard should send a letter to Félicie; but what failed to strike her as strange was, that Mère Jubine's Louison should be his messenger.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### A PRUDENT YOUNG LADY.

I HAVE not yet told you how very very pretty Mademoiselle Félicie was. She was not lovely; — her sister was that; — neither was she handsome, or beautiful. In each of these words there was something above or something beyond Mademoiselle Félicie. But she was that supremely *jolie femme* which a Frenchwoman alone ever is. Rather under than over the middle height, the first idea she gave you was that of perfect proportion. She had not the most beautiful throat, or the most beautiful arm, or hand, or shoulder, in the world; no one particular limb reminded you of a statue; but the whole went together marvellously well! Each part so fitted the other, the ensemble was so harmonious, so pleasant to the eye, that you were charmed without knowing why, and would have voted to be insupportable whoever should have attempted to persuade you that you ought not to be so. All the lines were soft and rounded in Félicie's face and figure. In her whole being there was not an angle, or any thing abrupt. She was all grace, all charm. Her voice was insinuating, her movements undulating, her looks caressing. She was precisely that kind of Frenchwoman whom, if you have the most distant dream of remaining, — however little, — your own master, you had best never meet. She never alarms and never releases you.

Her grandmother, la belle Madame de Vérancour, had, as old Martin Prévost had told his nephew, been Félicie's perfect prototype; and, Heaven knows, her domestic career had not been one to render the position of her husband an enviable one. As a young woman of sixteen, before the Revolution, she had been distinguished by one

exploit only, but that one was enough. She was reputed to have beaten the famous Duc de Lauzun hollow, and to have considerably helped to ruin him, whilst absolutely vanquishing his inconstancy. She went by the name of "La Provinciale qui a roué Lauzun," and after the great catastrophe, she carried her devastations into her own department, and, till past fifty, levied contributions of all kinds upon the male population for many leagues round. Married or single, all paid tribute; and the evil-tongued declared that all classes were admitted alike to compete for her favour. Some went even further, and hinted that the present Vicomte was the son of a *Sous-Préfet* of the Empire, whom she certainly had managed to preserve from dismissal under the Restoration.

La belle Madame de Vérancour was not of a religious turn of mind. She did not even grow devout with old age, but died, it was said, in an altogether unsatisfactory manner. Her portrait, painted by Madame Lebrun, in the full costume of her palmy days of Versailles, hung in the drawing-room which the two sisters had arranged at the Château; and when Félicie happened to be alone, she would sit intently gazing at the image, with a look that was not easily definable. Was it envy, or was it merely curiosity alone?

Except for the powder which disguised the wavy chestnut hair — that thick, naturally curling, blond *cendré* hair, which Félicie dressed so exquisitely, — except for that, everything was alike in the too celebrated Lady of Vérancour and her descendant; the same calm, satin skin, with just enough of delicate colour to prevent its being pale; the same small nose, with its transparent nostrils; the same finely arched eyebrows, and strangely fascinating light hazel eyes; the same — no! not quite the same mouth. The epoch had set its stamp there, and Lauzun's mistress had the rich full blossomed lips that perhaps excused something out of much that they explained; whilst our Mademoiselle de Vérancour possessed lips so thin that they were hardly more than the edges of the mouth; bright red lines closing over twin rows of exquisitely pearl-like teeth, — with also the one little fault that they were rather pointed, rather sharp.

That was the impress of the age. Madame de Vérancour, la belle, had been lavish in every possible sense. This is not the defect of modern France. One person in D — had even been ungallant enough, — it was the Doctor, who disliked the people of the Château because they were all so

healthy that they never "consulted!" — one person had replied to a remark about Félicie's attractions: — "Attractive, may be; jolie comme un ange, may be; but that girl's an attorney!"

Mademoiselle Félicie did certainly give those who had dealings with her a notion that she was practical; but then irregularity, let alone prodigality, is accounted such a sin, and to be wanting in order brings down such reproof upon a woman in the France of our day!

Hitherto Félicie's field of action had been a limited one, and her adversaries had been mostly female ones. Of these she had not left one unconquered; and at the convent at Poitiers she was the "pattern-girl," the example held up by all the sisters, — excepting only the unfortunate Madame Marie Claire, who took refuge with Vévette; — and she had been pronounced dogmatically by Notre Mère to be certain to be an "honour to her sex," to be eminently wise and prudent and circumspect; strong against all sentimentality, and of an equally balanced mind. Monsieur de Vérancour, whilst congratulating himself upon having such a daughter, was not altogether without a certain feeling of inferiority when in her presence, and it had been affirmed by Céleste, who came herself under Félicie's direct control, that he was afraid of her.

After Champmorin's withdrawal from the projected matrimonial engagement, the Vicomte certainly did feel slightly embarrassed, and had not yet made up his mind as to the precise terms in which he should impart to his daughter that she was not likely to be married so soon as had been supposed.

She saved him all trouble on that point.

"Dear father," she said, one evening, in the sweetest of all possible tones, and preliminarily kissing him on the forehead, with the most touching grace — "Dear father; I know you have been annoyed, — pained, — about something that touches me and my establishment. I can guess what has happened; and though it is not customary for a young girl to mix herself up in such matters, still ours is an exceptional case, and I feel it incumbent upon me to share with you the burdens laid upon us by our position; — by the nobility of our name so sadly at war with the narrowness of our means."

"You always were an angel, Félicie," exclaimed her father; "but it is not fitting that" —

"I beg your pardon, father," interrupted she; "it is fitting that we should talk together over all this, for it is not fitting that our name should go a-begging. The daughters of illustrious houses are not constrained to the same little prudish practices as those of bourgeois origin, and where the honour of the race is at stake they must lay aside prejudice, and see what is best to be done, just as, in other ages, they would, in the absence of a garrison, have had to defend the Château, arms in hand. I know poor Monsieur de Champmorin has been obliged to retire."

Monsieur de Vérancour made a movement.

"He is not to be blamed, father," resumed Félicie; "he must not be blamed; we have nothing to reproach him with, and it would be unseemly and wrong in us to bear the slightest ill-will towards him."

"I bear him no ill-will whatever," muttered the Vicomte; "but those about him have talked, and will talk, and the position is a very awkward one."

"Yes, father dear, of course," rejoined Félicie, in her very blindest tones; "of course it is next to impossible to prevent people like notaries and all that class from discussing our affairs; they will talk of us; it is their chief pastime; and, — I don't deny it, — it falls naturally very heavy upon girls like us, to be made the theme of conversation of all the vulgar little bourgeois of such a miserable bit of a place as this; but that is the fault of provincial towns; — there is no other occupation save that of prying into your neighbours' concerns. If we were in Paris, instead of being in D —, we should escape all, or nearly all, the immediate effects of the disaster."

Vévette looked up from her tapestry with amazement.

"In Paris?" echoed the Vicomte. "Yes, probably so, everything passes unnoticed in Paris, as in all great centres; but what earthly chance would there ever be of our being able to get to Paris?"

There was a pause of a few seconds, and Félicie resumed, in a tone of discouragement then, after musing for a few moments, "To be sure; it is that perpetual want of money!" and then there came another silence.

"Why is it," asked Vévette, timidly, "that so much more money seems required for two people to live upon when they marry than each would find more than sufficient if they remained single? A single man can live on very little, a single woman

on less, yet, when it is a question of marrying, ten times their income appears not to be enough."

"Because, my poor child," rejoined Félicie, dogmatically, "well-born people do not marry to live, but to represent. We have to uphold our families and our names; and our duty is to take care that the children who succeed us are enabled to support their position in life with dignity. We have not yet, in spite of all Revolutions, come to such a state of things as is said to exist amongst the English, where, I believe, two individuals actually marry because they have taken some imaginary fancy for each other, and in their folly count for nothing the fortune and social standing of their children. No! we have not yet come to that."

Monsieur de Vérancour gazed at his eldest daughter with admiration, while she propounded her theories of social economy. "All that you say is right and wise," observed he with a sigh, leaning his head upon his hand; "but unluckily it brings about one result — the levelling of every thing before money. Without riches, what is to be done?"

"Yes, dear papa," answered Félicie, submissively; "you are right there, as you always are, and I can't help thinking it is wrong and unchristianlike in the persons of our caste to despise money as they do." Oh! Félicie, when do they so? — "to look down upon riches, when riches have so often been brought to our very feet by Providence, in order that by uniting with them we should elevate the rich to our own level, and teach them to be pious and right-thinking like us."

"Well, I can only say riches were never brought to my feet," remarked the Vicomte; "nor do I think that I can be accused of ever having scorned them."

"If I might venture, dearest father," suggested she, with her most caressing air, "though it is wandering far away from our subject, I would say that you were very hard, quite unmerciful, the other day, to poor Monsieur Richard." The Vicomte started, and, turning round, stared his daughter full in the face. "You quite abashed and hurt him when he was telling you of the great fortune he had inherited, and of what he means to make of Châteaubréville."

"No, I declare I did not," answered stoutly Monsieur de Vérancour; "just the contrary; I told him that if he had a hundred thousand francs a year he might actually marry a lady."

"Yes," responded Félicie, with the sweetest of all feline glances and accents; "but you did not tell it him — kindly."

"Humph! as to that," grunted her father, "I don't know how I told it him. I suppose I told it him just as I would have told it any other man of his sort."

"Ah! but you see, father dear, we should be so careful of hurting the feelings of those beneath us. Men don't think of that. Women do. Poor Monsieur Richard, you see, is somewhere about the richest man in the department, besides being the most amiable and worthy young man in the world. So perfectly right-thinking. In a year's time he will be Monsieur de Châteaubréville, with a splendid country house, and an establishment in Paris, and if, — as you advised him to do, — he should marry a well-born woman, we shall all go and visit at Châteaubréville, and we should really treat him already as a friend."

"Well, so we do!" ejaculated the Vicomte; "don't I let him dine here with us? Treat him as a friend! Yes; but I should like to see you, who theorise so finely, treating him as an equal."

"We are taught that all men are equal," said sweetly Félicie.

"But nobody believes it," retorted the Vicomte. "Why, I should like to see the rebuff he would get from you, if he ventured to ask you to become his wife. Treat him as an equal indeed!"

"In the first place, papa," rejoined Félicie, gently, but with a shade more of firmness in her tone, "one does not make one's equal of a man merely by marrying him; when la grande Mademoiselle married Lauzun, it was out of her power to make him her equal."

"Maybe," interrupted Monsieur de Vérancour; "but he made her pull off his boots all the same."

"That regards her confessor, and concerns her duties of obedience; but, I repeat it, marriage binds, but does not equalise: in the next place, I would not shrink from any sacrifice that should be needed for the good of our family, — of our house."

The Vicomte sprang to his feet, and clapping his two hands upon his breast, roared at her loudly, staring at her with all his might. "You, Félicie, you! You would marry Monsieur Richard?"

"It is Monsieur Richard who would not marry me, papa," she replied with imperturbable calmness.

"You would consent to be Madame Prévoist," continued her father, unheeding all interruptions.

"Never, papa," answered she, in a milder tone, and with even more calmness than before; "but I would consent to be Madame de Châteaubréville with a hundred thousand francs of income, and to live half the year in Paris, where the title of Count would be easy to obtain."

"A pretty thing, indeed, for us," sneered the Vicomte. "A title given by Monsieur Bonaparte! Why, you would be ashamed to wear it."

"No, indeed, papa, I should not. Authority is authority always; and there is our own cousin, the Marquis de Vouvray, who has let himself be made a Chamberlain, — the title means little enough for us, — but it means still the separation from those beneath, from the mass; that is the principal thing needed."

Monsieur de Vêrancour was silent for some moments, and rubbed his forehead anxiously. "Is it possible, Félicie," he asked at last, "that you can be serious? Is it possible you can mean that you would marry Monsieur Richard?"

"Father," she answered, steadily and slowly, "I tell you again there is no sacrifice I will not make to our position. I make it to you, I make it to Vêvêtte." The latter looked up suddenly with an air almost of terror. "It is my duty. We are not on earth to think of ourselves, but of others. One of my first duties is to think of Vêvêtte. Her turn must come in a year or two." Vêvêtte felt herself grow cold and shudder inwardly. "And how is she to be provided for?"

"You are, indeed, a perfect heroine," said the Vicomte, with conviction, and as though humbled at the superior virtue of his child.

"Luckily," resumed she, giving an upward glance of thanksgiving, "I have always had my duty held up before my eyes, and, after all, duty is a thing which a well-born woman does easily." Poor Vêvêtte felt more than ever what a wretched sinner she was. "The difficulty in all this," added Félicie, after a pause, "would be to bring poor Monsieur Richard to understand that he might ask for my hand." She watched her father with a very curious glance from under her eyelids whilst uttering these words. "It is a delicate and difficult negotiation. Perhaps the Abbé Leroy —"

Monsieur de Vêrancour waved his hand. "I think," interrupted he, "it would be quite possible to make Monsieur Richard understand; but, of course, I must reflect on all this. I must take time."

"Dear father!" exclaimed the girl, "of course you must do whatever you think fit. I shall always obey."

"Oh, Félicie!" cried Vêvêtte, throwing her arms around her sister's neck, when the Vicomte had retired for the night, "Can you? can you?"

"A well-born woman can always do what is her duty, my dear Vêvêtte," answered Mademoiselle Félicie, indulging in just a very little self-gratulation.

PROFESSOR CHURCH recently made a curious communication to the Chemical Society about the colouring matter of birds' plumage. A certain bird known as the Cape Lory, the *Touracus albocristatus* of ornithologists, has upon its pinion feathers some crimson spots popularly supposed to be blood stains. Mr. Church has extracted the dye from these and analysed it; and strangely enough, finds that it contains the metal copper in some organic form of combination. No other parts of the feathers besides the red stains gave any trace of

the metal. Further experiments are stayed for want of materials. Only a grain and a half of the pigment is procurable from a single bird, at the cost of half a guinea; so that there is not much fear of the poor bird being hunted for the riches it will yield. Perhaps, however, some other denizen of the air carries more precious gifts upon its wings. With the foregoing facts before us may we expect that as we now get the pearl from the oyster we shall some day obtain its setting from the golden plumes of a bird?

— Once a Week.



From The Victoria Magazine.

## WOMEN IN MINIATURE.

BY FREDERICK G. BAYLIS.

"Tis I who dare attempt unusual strains,  
Of hosts unsung, and unfrequented plains;  
The small, shrill trump, and chiefs of little size.  
BEATTIE — "*Battle of the Pigmies and Cranes.*"

MADAME DE GIRARDIN \* has aptly indicated, in two sentences, the extreme sensibility to ridicule of a person of diminutive stature. "He avoided," she says, "large men, because near them he appeared at his smallest. He avoided beautiful women, because their majesty humiliated him; but what he most of all disliked was to meet with (what was rare) a man as small as himself; oh then, indeed, he suffered martyrdom!" This peculiar sensibility, however, we may readily believe, is not common among dwarfs, who, as a rule, appear gratified with the interest and curiosity they excite, and who, if they do not absolutely court observation, certainly take little trouble to avoid it.

Dwarfs have naturally attracted a considerable degree of interest in all ages and countries. In remote times, their sole purpose in life seemed to be to furnish amusement for the titled and wealthy. In recent days they have been regarded as an interesting species of physical phenomena, worthy of scientific observation and inquiry. And though it must be confessed that the precise causes of diminutive stature are almost as obscure as ever, yet the investigations which have been made from time to time, have yielded useful information to the philosopher and physiologist. The morbid imagination of women, improper nursing, and various infant maladies, whose origin it would be difficult to determine, may reasonably be regarded as among the most obvious causes of stunted growth.

The pigmies, whose conflicts with the cranes are celebrated in Attic verse, were understood to be creatures of about eighteen inches high, who lived in some unknown region near the fabulous ocean of the Greek bard. By later writers — some of whom, let us say, cannot claim the poet's privilege — their domain has been placed in the interior of Africa, in the frigid North, in mystic India, and in sunny Asia Minor. What says Beattie?

Where India reddens to the early dawn,  
Winds a deep vale, from vulgar eye withdrawn,

\* *Esprit de Madame de Girardin* : "Paris, Hetzel.

Bosom'd in groves the lowly region lies,  
And rocky mountains round the border rise,  
Here till the doom of fate its fall decreed,  
The empire flourish'd of the pigmy breed.

Now as to dwarf lore. Strabo divided pigmies into two classes; in the first he placed all those who were three spans high, and in the second all those of five spans. Speaking correctly, a dwarf is a person of small stature, whose various parts are suitably proportioned. Aulus Gellius, however, and other writers after him, down to Buffon, regarded as dwarfs all persons of low stature, without reference to physical conformation. The Romans, it is well known, were fond of having pigmies about their persons and households, and so general was the demand for these little creatures, that it became a trade to produce them, the ordinary practice being to confine the limbs of children with bandages, etc., and thus prevent their growth. Roman dwarfs generally went unclothed, or nearly so, and were decked with costly jewellery. Several of the Cæsars showed a ridiculous partiality for pigmies. Domitian, with a refinement of cruelty, formed a troop of pigmy gladiators. Augustus patronised a remarkable dwarf, of good family, who weighed but seventeen pounds, and caused a statue to be made of him, the eyes of which were precious stones.\* A dwarf almost as remarkable, named Conopas, was kept by his granddaughter, Julia. The absurd taste for dwarfs among the Roman nobility, went out, it appears, on the accession of Alexander Severus.

In almost all countries of which we know anything, dwarfs have enjoyed the favour and protection of the great. The Egyptians and Turks kept them, and we read that on the conquest of Mexico, the Spaniards found several in the king's palace of Montezuma. Stanislaus, the exiled King of Poland, solaced his retirement with the companionship of a half-witted little creature named Nicholas Ferry, and the learned Philip, Earl of Arundel, showed a similar partiality for a dwarf named Robin, whose portrait, with that of the countess, a fool, and a dog, was painted by Rubens, in 1620. Several kings of France showed favour to dwarfs; and Charles I., of England, and his queen, Henrietta, were present at the marriage of Richard Gibson (celebrated by the poet Waller in some characteristic lines), and frequently amused themselves with the antics of the no less remarkable Jeffery Hudson, of whom Sir Walter Scott has given, in his "*Peveril of the Peak*," the most striking portrait we have seen.

\* Suetonius,

In Weirix's Bible there are several curious engravings in which pigmies are represented, and they are often to be found carved on antique gems, mounted on birds, carrying grasshoppers, sitting in shells, playing flutes, and angling with rod and line.

Dwarfs are sometimes endowed with a high degree of intelligence, and have been known to acquire several languages, and even attain considerable proficiency in the fine arts. These, however, are exceptional cases. The intellect of dwarfs seems to be naturally weak, and, as a rule, little attention is given to its cultivation and development.

Leaving the history of dwarfs in general, and of male dwarfs in particular, let us give one or two short sketches of "women in miniature" who have invited public attention in this country. *Place aux dames!*

Miss Grachami, a Sicilian dwarf, was exhibited in London half-a-century ago, and was then ten years old. She was a merry sportive little creature, rather vain of her personal graces, fond of wine, music, and gay clothes, and delighted at the admiration she everywhere excited.

Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,  
Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies.

Her height was nineteen inches and a half; the length of her foot (a foot which would have put Cinderella to the blush) three inches and one eighth; the length of her forefinger, one inch and seven-eighths. Round the waist she measured eleven inches and a quarter; round the head twelve inches and three-quarters; round the wrist two inches and seven-sixteenths; and round the ankle three inches and a quarter. These figures will perhaps best convey an impression of her tiny yet elegant proportions. She enjoyed remarkably good health, was full of animal spirits, and displayed an intelligence far beyond her age. For doctors she entertained a not unnatural aversion, as they frequently displeased her by making minute examinations. When the doctor was announced she doubled up her "filbert of a fist," and glowed with indignation.

"A tolerable-sized doll," says a writer in the *Literary Gazette* of the time, "acting and speaking, would not astonish us so much — for nature is, in this instance, far more wonderful than art would be. Only imagine a creature about half as large as a newly-born infant, perfect in all parts and lineaments, uttering words in a strange and unearthly voice, understanding what you

say, and replying to your questions. . . Here is the pigny of your superstition in actual life; here is the pigny of ancient mythology brought down to your own day." The same writer describes, with much vivacity, in a subsequent number of his journal, a visit he received from the little woman, during which he was permitted to measure her height, the size of her head, waist, ankle, etc. "We had," he says, "a pleasant chat together, and I found my little lady, like all other ladies, much more agreeable in private than in public. She was lively and interesting; sat upon a small tea-caddy with infinite grace, and listened to music with evident pleasure, beating time with her tiny foot, and waving her head, just as any boarding-school Miss in her upper teens, and conscious of the beauty of her movements, would do." A large doll which he presented to her was received with rapture, while a smaller one, about five inches long, was rejected with strong marks of disdain. The larger one became "a playfellow, a companion, a sister." For a couple of hours "her attention was unrelaxed, she was observant and animated throughout. She walked a few paces, and expressed many various feelings of like and dislike, both to persons and things, of impatience, enjoyment, mirth — the latter prevailing."

Miss Grachami was exhibited in London for a considerable period, and created rather a sensation.

Nanetta Stocker was a charming little Austrian lady, who attracted a large number of visitors during her stay in London.

A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food,  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

She performed skilfully on the piano, and was generally accompanied by another dwarf named Hauptman, who played on the violin. The two sometimes waltzed together for the amusement of the company. They were presented to the royal family, at Buckingham House, in 1815. Three years later they were exhibited in the Strand. Nanette was twenty-four inches high. Hauptman, who was a native of Strasburg, was thirty-four inches, or ten inches taller than his fair companion, whom he survived ten years. She died on May 4, 1819, at the age of thirty-nine, and was buried at St. Phillips, Birmingham. The following inscription was carved on her gravestone —

IN MEMORY  
of

NANETTA STOCKER,

Who quitted this life the fourth day of May,  
1819,

at the age of thirty-nine years.

The smallest woman of this kingdom,  
and one of the most accomplished,  
She was not more than thirty-three inches high.  
She was a native of Austria.

Miss Shaw, who was described as "the beautiful fairy," was exhibited with her brother, also a dwarf, at Bartholomew Fair, in 1831. She was then forty-one years of age. Her height was thirty-two inches. Her brother was four years younger. Both were fairly proportioned, of pleasing countenances, and possessed of several accomplishments. They were presented to George IV. who, to adopt the language of the exhibitor, "expressed the most pleasing astonishment at these wonderful persons."

Mary Williams, a Welsh dwarf, who appeared in her national costume, made a limited acquaintance with the metropolitan public in May, 1845. She had then just arrived from Wales, and was most probably a peasant by birth, drawn from her native obscurity by some enterprising speculator. She was stated to be upwards of forty-four years of age, though not more than thirty-six inches high. She could not speak a word of English. A book containing her "extraordinary history" was published, but the public treated both the lady and her biography with great indifference.

A little Somersetshire woman, thirty-seven inches high, was shown "next door to the King's Head, in Smithfield, during the time of Bartholomew Fair." She was in her fortieth year. She conversed intelligently, and was an agreeable person.

Elsphet Watson, who attained the extraordinary age of a hundred and fifteen years, was thirty-three inches high. She was born at Perth, where she died in 1800. A notice of her occurs in the *Monthly Magazine* (Vol. X., p. 97).

The case of Hannah Bourne furnishes the only well-authenticated instance we have been able to discover of a dwarf having a child of the ordinary size. She was confined in the workhouse, Stoke-upon-Trent, in May, 1808, of a still-born child, measuring twenty-one inches and a-half—only three and a-half less than the mother, who was twenty-five inches high; it was in every respect well-formed. Of the mother we know very little. A married dwarf named Mrs. Butcher was exhibited in London, in December, 1813. The little matron was born in York-

shire, and was described as "the smallest lady and the greatest wonder of the present age." The *onus probandi* was left to the public.

Lydia Walpole, whose height was thirty-five inches, is a dwarf described by Morley, in his "Memorials of Bartholomew Fair." She was born at Addiscombe, near Yarmouth, and was "sociable, agreeable, and intelligent." A remarkable little Mexican lady, known as Francisca, is described in a Paris journal, *Le Globe*, of December, 1829. She was seventeen years of age, and only twenty-seven and a-half inches high. She acted as *fille de chambre* to the lady upon whose estate she was born, was very intelligent, and picked up a considerable knowledge of French during her stay in Paris. As in many other cases, of her subsequent career we are ignorant.

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From The Victoria Magazine.

## OCCULT PERSONAL INFLUENCE.

BY J. ASHCROFT NOBLE.

ANY reader who is led by the title of this paper to expect a dissertation upon the Black Art or the Occult Sciences will be disappointed. I am neither proficient in the one nor learned in the other; and I cannot say that I have any ardent desire to know much about either. The occult influence of which I shall speak is, to some extent, the possession of all; is daily exercised by men and women who never heard of Paracelsus or Cornelius Agrippa, and yet is of so subtle and mysterious a nature that the fool and the philosopher are alike unable fully to comprehend it, though the fool is, of course, not the man to express his inability. This influence is the influence of personality, and the reasons for speaking of it as occult will soon be plain enough.

Every one knows that words and actions are, in themselves, wonderfully influential. Every hour of our lives we all say and do certain things in order to produce certain states of thought or feeling in others, with more or less expectation of success. Not only so; we have constant opportunities for watching our acquaintances pursue the same course; and if we have even ordinary powers of observation, we cannot have failed to notice the strange and apparently inexplicable fact that while some people seem to

possess any amount of influence over others, and yet take no pains to secure it, there are, on the other hand, many men whose frantic exertions to obtain this same influence seem all ineffectual.

This fact, which is obvious enough, inevitably leads to the conclusion that words and actions, though to some extent intrinsically influential, owe their main power to the force of the personality lying behind them, just as the *momentum* of a flying cannon-ball depends partly upon its own weight, but in a still larger measure upon the quantity and quality of the gunpowder by which it has been propelled into space. The latter source of influence is a much more interesting subject of thought than the former one, just because it is more impalpable and mysterious. The weight of a word or an action may be gauged pretty accurately, but it is rather more difficult to put a soul into the balance, and find out its precise equivalent. There are, doubtless, some men in Italy whose moral excellence is equal to that of Garibaldi; there are hundreds whose mental power is greater than his; there are thousands whose arm is stronger to wield the sword, and whose eye is truer to point the rifle; but, in spite of this, a word from the great liberator rings like a clarion from Milan to Sicily, while the clamorous eloquence of men who are in many points his equals or superiors is unheard or unregarded by a heedless or indifferent nation. Is it not evident that this marvellous influence is not the result of any mere quality (such, for example, as courage or conscientiousness) which can be considered apart from the man himself, but that it flows from his central personality, and is hidden and incommunicable.

Five centuries ago Girolamo Savonarola exercised the same wonderful influence over the citizens of Florence. It is difficult to imagine any scene more remarkable than the one pictured in George Eliot's "Romola," where the great novelist describes his preaching in the *duomo*. "During the last appeal Savonarola had stretched out his arms and lifted up his eyes to heaven, his strong voice had alternately trembled with emotion and risen again in renewed energy; but the passion with which he offered himself as a victim became at last too strong to allow of further speech, and he ended in a sob. Every changing tone, vibrating through the audience, shook them into answering emotion. There were plenty among them who had very moderate faith in the *Frates*' prophetic mission, and who, in their cooler moments, loved him little;

nevertheless, they too were carried along by the great wave of feeling which gathered its force from sympathies which lay deeper than all theory. A loud responding sob rose at once from the wide multitude, while Savonarola had fallen on his knees and buried his face in his mantle." Effects like these are certain evidences of the possession of this strange occult power. The person in whom it is found can compel even his enemies to bow before him. They may regard him with bitter hatred; but, while he stands in their presence, they are possessed — against their will I had almost written, but their will is subdued — by an emotion which more nearly resembles ardent and unreasoning love. Most of us are acquainted with people to whom we feel perfectly indifferent as long as we are absent from them, but whose presence casts a spell over us from which we cannot escape, and against which we cannot even struggle. They have a rattlesnake power of fascination. When we understand more of the force which is vaguely called animal magnetism, we may, perhaps, be able more clearly to define it. For some time, however, there is little hope of increased knowledge of the subject, for the thoroughly scientific men, who alone could help us to it, sedulously avoid entering a region which has been for years the battle-ground of contending quacks.

The existence of these "fascinating people" explains a good deal of what seems the grossest insincerity. Brown and Jones are discussing their acquaintances, and Jones speaks most disparagingly of Robinson, who shortly afterwards appears upon the scene, when, to Brown's great disgust or amusement, Jones addresses him in terms not merely polite but flattering. This is, of course, weak, but not necessarily insincere. It is quite possible that Robinson's influence over Jones is such that in his presence Jones's feelings towards him undergo a complete, though only a temporary change, and those feelings are as truly expressed by the words of flattery as they were an hour ago by the words of depreciation, though it is almost certain that he will be unable to vindicate himself from the charge of insincerity. To be weak is indeed to be miserable, for weakness is a proteus assuming at different times the shape of every imaginable sin.

The mysteriousness of this power of fascination lies, I think, in the fact that it is so entirely independent of means. We see certain effects produced, and we try to discover the cause; but our inquiries do and

must prove failures, unless we are prepared to take into account this occult influence of personality. The wonderful popularity of a preacher like Mr. Spurgeon can only be satisfactorily accounted for in this manner. He has considerable talent, but there are many men of greater mental power who always preach to empty pews. He is eccentric, but mere eccentricity is never the basis of permanent popularity. He is earnest, but not more so than hundreds of unknown preachers. He has a fine voice, but a voice which fills a place with volumes of eddying sound may not fill it with eager listeners. His thoughts are always common-place, and his language is often coarse. And yet this extraordinary man — for extraordinary in some manner he must be — has drawn, not for weeks or for months, but for years, thousands of people together Sunday after Sunday, and has inspired them with an enthusiasm which is almost unequalled in the history of religious congregations.

Whatever the mysterious attraction may be there must be a *something*, not in his words, nor in his voice, nor in his manner, but in his personality, which draws men to him and transfigures with tints of genius the cloudy commonplaces of a sectarian theology. Intellect has influence, knowledge has influence, eloquence has influence; but there are men who have a power in themselves which enables them, without either intellect, or knowledge, or eloquence to sway the multitudes and subdue them into deference and discipleship. We can speculate concerning the nature of this power all the more easily, because our knowledge is so infinitesimal. It may consist in an intense vitality, though this explanation explains nothing, because we are altogether ignorant of the nature of vitality itself, knowing it only from its manifestations; it may be — and this hypothesis seems probable enough — a power resembling that of the mesmerist; or it may be the result of a wide humanity; that is, of those sympathies which, as George Eliot has said in the passage I have quoted, "lie deeper than all theory," and establish a thousand new points of meeting between the spirits of man and man.

There is one fact in connection with the matter which is perhaps worth notice — the fact that so many of the men in whom this power of influence is most clearly seen are of that physical temperament which the early phrenologists entitled "bilious," though without any reference to the secretions of the liver. This is the temperament

of the most successful mesmerists. Its outward manifestations are generally black straight hair, eyes of the same colour, a dark complexion, and a fine osseous and muscular development. The lamented Edward Irving, whose moral and intellectual endowments, great as they were, do not fully account for his marvellous influence, which was everywhere felt, was a type of this temperament. Men who are known as persuasive orators have also, with few exceptions, a large animal nature; and this fact, which can be easily verified, seems to lead to the conclusion that the nature of this occult influence is physical rather than mental or moral. I used the word *persuasive* in the last sentence rather than the word *eloquent*, because eloquence as ordinarily understood is quite unnecessary for the purpose of influencing large multitudes, who will listen to it unmoved, while they are swayed hither and thither at the will of a man who, while he utters commonplace thoughts in commonplace language, does notwithstanding possess a key to the hearts of the men whom he addresses for which the more finished orator seeks in vain.

Judged by intellectual standards Edmund Burke was a far greater orator than Charles James Fox; he was a man of wider culture, of loftier imagination, of keener insight, of greater affluence of language; and yet he perpetually addressed a scant and weary audience, always unimpressed, and by him always unimpressible; while Fox never spoke except to a crowded and enthusiastic House of Commons, convinced — against its will perhaps, but still undeniably convinced — at least for the moment — by the inexplicable power of the speaker.

I do not know that argument is of much use in this matter, for in spite of seemingly incontestable reasoning and conclusive fact, the majority of men will continue to believe that the power of oratory lies not in the orator, but either in the spoken words or in the manner of their delivery. If a man hear two speeches on the same evening, and be impressed by the one but untouched by the other, it is never an easy task to convince him that the latter may have been after all the finer performance, and that he has been influenced neither by the matter nor the manner of the speech, but solely by the personality of the speaker. When any means are used with the intention of bringing about a certain end, and we see that the end is attained, it is difficult to believe that those means have had little or no connection with the result brought about; that the



effect produced owes its existence, not to the cause which is apparent, but to one which is hidden.

But whoever denies that the essential element in effective oratory is personal rather than rhetorical, I do not think that the most sceptical, matter-of-fact, insensitive man alive will deny that there is such a thing as the occult personal influence, which I have set myself to write about in this paper. There are some things which cannot be denied by a sane man. A philosopher may say, "there is no such thing as matter;" a lunatic cannot be found mad enough to affirm that there is no such thing as sensation; and, like sensation, this occult influence is a self-evident fact. The evidence for its existence is neither more nor less than the universal experience of mankind. We have all met people who possess the power of making others see through their eyes and hear through their ears, just as itinerant exponents of electro-biology used to amuse their audiences by the exhibition of persons attempting to gather apples from the back of an arm-chair, or making wry faces over what seemed to them a dose of salts, but which was in reality only pure water. They seem in some measure to deprive us of our individuality, and when on coming to ourselves we endeavour to investigate the source of their power it defies our analysis, because it lies not in anything that they say or do, but in something that they are.

Souls are either positive or negative — impressive or impressible. Some men, like Garibaldi and Savonarola and Irving, appear able to project their own personality upon every one with whom they are brought into contact, while other men by no means devoid of high moral or intellectual attainments seem incapable of exercising any influence beyond that which of necessity belongs to their words and actions. They are always surrounded by a non-conducting atmosphere, and though they may burn they can never warm — though their light be brilliant it never radiates and can never illumine.

To some extent, nevertheless, this occult power of influence belongs to every man by right of his manhood; for just as the body occupies a certain space in the universe of matter, and affects the position of all atoms in its vicinity, so the soul occupies that which corresponds to space in the world of spirit; and, in a manner that is strangely subtle, but none the less real, affects all other souls that are brought within the range

of its action by the movement of choice, or the guidance of destiny. Every man who looks for a moment behind him will see clearly how he himself has been acted upon and influenced — how his own personality has been shaped and moulded by that of the men and women, and even of the children, who have acted parts, however fragmentary, in the drama of his life. He will remember the men who, while engaged only in seemingly mean and trivial activities, did nevertheless in some mysterious manner make him realize — as no fervid orator ever could — the sweet sanctities of life and the awful nearness of divine presences; and those others who, without a word of suggestion or temptation, roused, as by the touch of an infernal spirit, all the wild passions of his nature into readiness for instant fight. He will remember too — surely not without some burning of the incense of thankfulness — those noble women who, though they soared not above the daily cares and joys of their uneventful lives, still made him purer for evermore; and he will not forget those children who, by a mystical attraction, seemed to bring him within the boundaries of that heavenly kingdom to which such little ones by right of wrought-out redemption and spoken benediction belong.

It is because of this constancy of operation that we can really control our influences only by controlling our *selves*. No cunning selection of word or laborious choice of action will in the long run avail against the constant current of our nature. I may vehemently say "yes" with my mouth, but if I say "no" with my heart, it is the "no" rather than the "yes" which will vibrate on the inner ear of the listener; and though he may strive to believe the "yes," because he would fain regard it as the fair reflection of some truthfulness or goodness in me, that unspoken "no" will still haunt and trouble him with a vague unrest, and — however unconscious of it he may be — its burden will lie upon his spirit.

Our influences are ourselves in action. Disguise it as we may, the handwriting of the inner nature is ever the same. We leave our mark on every one we meet, and we cannot choose what that mark shall be except in so far as we can choose good or evil for ourselves; for it is an inexorable law that, though all the beauty or deformity of a character may not be *seen*, the hidden splendours and terrors of personality will make themselves *felt*.

From The Saturday Review.

## BRAZIL.\*

In the beginning of 1865 Professor Agassiz wished to visit Brazil, partly in consequence of disordered health, partly with a view to scientific investigations. He was doubtful as to the possibility of providing a sufficient force of assistants. A friend, Mr. Nathaniel Thayer, met him at this time, and after expressing an interest in his journey, said, "You wish, of course, to give it a scientific character; take six assistants with you; and I will be responsible for all their expenses, personal and scientific." This characteristic piece of American liberality enabled Professor Agassiz to set the expedition on foot. Its progress was assisted by numerous sympathizers, from the Emperor of Brazil to the fishermen on the Amazon. The Pacific Mail Steamship Company took his party to Rio; another Company lent him a boat for a month on the Amazon; the Brazilian Government placed a small ship of war at his disposal; and, in short, there never was a scientific explorer so cordially welcomed and so warmly assisted on all hands. The results have apparently been commensurate with the means employed. Enormous collections illustrating the natural history, and especially the fishes, of Brazil have been stored in the Museum at Cambridge, Massachusetts. Professor Agassiz has begun a scientific work, founded upon these researches, the publication of which must, as he tells us, take many years. Meanwhile the present very agreeable volume contains a popular account of the journey, and its chief scientific results. It is for the most part in the form of a journal kept by Mrs. Agassiz, but with considerable contributions from the Professor. As the joint authors are unable to distinguish their own shares, we cannot affect to do it for them; we can only say that between them they have put together one of the pleasantest and most unaffected books of travel that it has lately been our fortune to read.

There is something specially delightful in reading about the Amazons in the dingy atmosphere of a London winter. The imagination is agreeably relieved by an escape from crowded and dismal streets to the glories of tropical scenery. Mrs. Agassiz does not indeed sit down deliberately to give us glowing descriptions, or to burst into rhapsodies of enthusiasm, but the plainest

statements of the wonders of the valley of the Amazons are perhaps the most impressive. Nothing can be better adapted to heighten their effect than the contrast between the scenery to which Mrs. Agassiz takes us in the spirit, and that which we may see with our bodily eyes. Look, for example, at that respectable but grimy rivulet which we call the Thames, strictly confined within his banks, and converted into a large open drain by civilized intelligence. Then think of the oceanic Amazons, rolling its waters for thousands of miles exactly as it pleases, forming new channels and deserting old ones according to its good will and pleasure, with an island half as big as Ireland in its mouth, and forming an interlacing network of huge water-courses of which the smallest would be a first-rate river elsewhere. Or look at the poor trees which struggle feebly for existence against the smoky atmosphere of a London park, and then turn in imagination to the exuberant tropical forest, an object of which the first sight impresses one as forcibly as the first sight of the ocean, of high mountains, or of a boundless plain. Or we might compare the crowds of toiling human beings in our streets with the lazy luxury of the scattered villagers who pick up an easy living amongst the forests without an attempt to struggle seriously against the gigantic forces of nature. How pleasant it must be to get everything that one can possibly want at the expense of a little shooting or fishing in the early morning, and then to lie down and smoke in one's hammock through the hot hours of the day! There is something luxurious about the very name of an "igrapé," or water-path—a natural canal through the depths of the forest, leading to lakes alive with waterfowl, to pools shaded by such impenetrable foliage that they are cold even under a tropical sun, and with an occasional herd of capyharas lazily tumbling into the stream, or a sloth hanging to a branch, "the very picture of indolence, with its head sunk between its arms." It is tantalizing to think that one may get to this paradise of lotseaters on board of an excellent steamboat, with comfortable state-rooms and bath-rooms, and find numbers of hospitable people only too glad to entertain a stranger for any length of time, and to help him to shoot toucans or catch porpoises, or discover endless varieties of fish and insects unknown to naturalists, or indulge in any other sport of the country. Mrs. Agassiz, it is true, speaks once or twice of the melancholy which is at times produced by the scenery. The

\* *A Journey in Brazil.* By Prof. and Mrs. Louis Agassiz. London: Trubner & Co. 1868.

vast impenetrable forest solitudes, and the sight of man picking up a precarious existence like a petty insect rather than a subduer of nature, is no doubt oppressive after a time; but a poor cockney, who on the whole has abundant opportunities of familiarity with his own race, feels his mouth water for a moment and has a temporary misgiving as to the advantages of civilization. He is conscious of a half desire to pack up his portmanteau and be off, to sling his hammock in the midst of the forests and beside the inexhaustible streams of the mightiest river on earth. Some day or other the trees will be turned into lumber and the rivers embanked, and the sloths and the toucans will have a bad time of it. The human race may be the better in some respects, but they will lose a kind of enchanted garden of which the bare description is soothing to the inhabitant of cities.

It is true that the natives of this delightful region are not of a very attractive order. In spite of a laudable desire to find something to praise in people who have treated them with so much kindness, neither the Professor nor Mrs. Agassiz succeed in giving us a very favourable idea of their hospitable entertainers. The Brazilian Government, they tell us, is enlightened, and endeavours to do what it can for science. Still this intelligent Government has a pleasant way of recruiting its armies; it sends out a press-gang which catches unlucky Indians, totally ignorant of Portuguese, and not having a notion of the cause of their arrest; it chains them together two and two like criminals, and marches them to the towns, or has their legs passed through heavy blocks of wood, and sends them on board its steamboats. They are sent off to the war, and the province from which they are taken boasts of its large contribution to the national forces. Again, the emancipation question is treated in a far more moderate spirit than has been the case in the United States; slavery is gradually dying down under a reasonable system; emancipation is frequent, and slave-labour is by degrees being limited to agricultural purposes. On the other hand, the mixture of races seems to be producing the worst effects. According to Professor Agassiz, the amalgamation of the white, negro, and Indian races is producing a "mongrel nondescript type, deficient in mental and physical energy," and without the good qualities of any of its progenitors. It is remarkable that in these cross-breeds the tendency seems to be to revert to the Indian type, with a gradual obliteration both of white and negro characteristics. The absence of

any strong prejudices against race is marked by the election of a negro as Professor of Latin, in preference to candidates of other races; but, if M. Agassiz is correct, the absence of social distinction produces anything but a healthy effect upon the physical character of the race. The whites themselves come in for some severe criticism. The women, we are told, are scarcely educated at all; the priests have the merit of patriotism, but seem to be ignorant, immoral, and indolent; and the towns along the river are for the most part in a state of decay. It is only fair to add that M. Agassiz discovers many more promising symptoms in various directions, and expresses a "deep-rooted belief in the future progress and prosperity of Brazil, and sincere personal gratitude towards her." But we cannot say that a perusal of the journal tends to confirm this impression in his readers. We are struck by the hospitality and kindness of the people, and even by the sympathy felt by many of them in the author's scientific pursuits; but, on the whole, we receive an impression of general indolence and apathy on the part of the majority of the civilized inhabitants. Mrs. Agassiz tells us that the flowers of the Amazonian forests always remind her of hot-house plants — that there comes "a warm breath from the depths of the wood laden with moisture and perfume, like the air from the open door of a conservatory"; and we seem to perceive that the Brazilians themselves have suffered not a little from the hot-house atmosphere in which they live. The children, we are told, have a generally unhealthy appearance; and the population as well as the products of the country seem to be rendered languid by the everlasting vapour-bath in which they pass their days.

The Professor and his little band of companions do not seem to have given way to the depressing influences of the climate. If there is anything disagreeable about the narrative, it arises from a certain fishy flavour which almost impregnates the pages. Wherever the party go, their interest seems to be concentrated upon fish. They go out fishing at morning and evening. Whenever they reach a village or a house, the inhabitants, having been duly warned, are watching for them with endless tubfuls of fish. All the intervals of their time, from morning to night, are occupied with putting fish into alcohol, or making drawings of them whilst yet alive. The decks of the steamboat seem to have been covered with innumerable vessels all adapted for the permanent or temporary reception of fish. It would have reminded us, we fancy, of some of the fishing

villages at the height of the herring season, when the lanes are paved with fish scales, and the very air has a flavour of fish. Professor Agassiz naturally turned his attention to that part of the creation upon which he is one of the greatest authorities. He seems to have reaped a fish harvest which surpassed his fondest expectations. He discovered, as he tells us, from 1,800 to 2,000 species of fish; twice as many as are to be found in the Mediterranean, and more than are known to exist in the whole Atlantic ocean. It is no wonder if for the time he became almost fish-mad. His principal interest was in the discovery that each of these species for the most part inhabited a very narrow district, so that, as he ascended or descended a single section of the river under apparently identical circumstances, he came across entirely different fish populations. This circumstance, in his opinion, tells very much against the Darwinian hypothesis, of which he is an ardent opponent. It is, indeed, the only objection to be raised against his scientific zeal that he seems to have gone out with a preconceived determination to find evidence against Mr. Darwin's theories.

The question, however, is only touched very slightly in the present book; when he has got his army of potted fish into order, he will be able to draw such morals as he chooses for the benefit of the scientific world. The most remarkable result which he puts forward in this volume bears upon another field of inquiry in which he is already distinguished. He extends the theory of a previous glacial period to an extent which will startle some of its boldest supporters. Not only has he discovered distinct traces of former glaciers upon some of the lower ranges in the neighbourhood of the coast, but he declares his belief in a gigantic glacier which formerly filled the whole valley of the Amazons. When a glacier thousands of miles in length existed under the tropics, the world must have been a pleasant place of residence. We can here say nothing of the evidence by which this bold theory is supported, but we will repeat his invitation to members of the Alpine Club to trace the outlines of glaciers on the mountains of Ceará. A steamboat will take them easily from Liverpool to Pernambuco, and thence it is only two days to Ceará. Now that Swiss glaciers are worked out, it may be a melancholy satisfaction to members of that enterprising fraternity to investigate the few remains of a period when an Alpine Club—if such had existed—might have found a whole continent for the scene of congenial labours.

From The Imperial Review.

### SHOULD MARRIED WOMEN DANCE?

THERE is something almost unseemly in the spectacle of half a dozen young married women walking off with some of the best partners in the room, whilst a row of girls are sitting neglected against the wall! Neither ignorance nor thoughtlessness can be pleaded in excuse. Women thoroughly know women, whatever else they may know; and there is not one of them that is not vividly conscious of what heart-burning it causes to a poor girl to hear the music and watch the many twinkling feet of a ball-room, and play the almost ignominious part of passive spectator. Grown-up women clutching at all the toys or sweetmeats off a Christmas tree at a juvenile party, would not be a more unnatural spectacle. Grown-up men eager to win the stakes at a round game got up for lads home for the holidays, would not be more cruel or inhuman. We are constrained to plead for tenderness and consideration on the part of young women who are married towards young women who are not. Might not Sidney's words, as he handed the draught of water to the dying soldier at Lützen, be profitably remembered?—"Thy need is greater than mine." Sidney had need of it too. What need has a married woman of dancing partners at all? Women sometimes complain that they have no mission, and that the field of action is selfishly closed against them. A married woman ought to have no grounds for such a complaint. But if she insists on it that she has, we are ready with a reply. Her mission, amongst other things, is to be kind and good to girls who are not yet as fortunate as herself. She ought to fancy them perpetually saying to her, "Such as I am, you once were." We do not want young married women to turn match-makers. But we do want them to forward the cause that they themselves once thought so good, as their present condition testifies. They should regard themselves as positively retained for the prosecution of the chief happiness and destiny of their sex. They can do so much towards it, if they only will. Unfortunately, they can do so much to oppose or retard it; and they do it, by infesting ball-rooms, and walking off with partners under the very eyes of girls who, of course, are in the very sorest need of them.

This is the chivalrous view of the question, it may be said, though we think it requires no great stretch of female chivalry to act

up to it. Rather should we be inclined to call it the social aspect of the question. But it has its self-regarding one as well. For a few years — ordinarily, for a very few — the married woman may, if she will, indulge and exult in her comparative superiority. If she does so, however, it is at her peril. Before the game is over, she will suffer as much mortification as ever she inflicted. Sooner or later, the time comes when she is no longer regarded as the desirable partner she once was; and by-and-by the plainest unmarried girl in the room will be preferred to her. For a time, old friends will continue to ask her to dance — say once, each of them, in an evening. Men are usually delicate and considerate in such matters, and for “auld lang syne,” and not to wound her, they will make what they regard as a sacrifice. But even masculine delicacy and consideration have their limits, and the period at length arrives when they ask her no more. She has long perceived that the tide of admiration is ebbing away from her, and she finally finds herself landed, high and dry, on that dreary bit of ground where wallflowers most do congregate. Had she but renounced, in time, what is now renouncing her! But it is too late. She cannot plead that she does not dance, for nobody asks. She hopes against hope — as she once made others hope, with similar feelings — and thinks that, to-night at least, some of her old admirers will find her out, and give her back her youth, by whirling her round in a good gallop. In vain! She has manufactured for herself a sort of beauty-dial, an accurate measurement of the radiance of her own charms; and she sees, convincingly demonstrated, that her sun has set for ever. We have hurried over her decline, which is in reality a somewhat slow one — we find it so exceedingly painful. Her belief in the continued existence of her charms dies a lingering death, every fresh step towards its dissolution being more and more harrowing. St. Evremont says that the last sighs of a handsome woman are rather for the loss of her beauty than for the loss of her life. But why should she ever have to heave them? Why should she ever know that her beauty is dying? She need not, unless she goes out of the way to provide herself with such a pitiless register as we have described. A time must inevitably come when she will be obliged to give up dancing. Would she not do well to give it up at the particular juncture when she can offer the best of reasons for doing so, and can plead her new dignity as her sufficient excuse? Men will

still press her to dance, and she cannot fail to be slightly gratified by their importunity. But if she is steady in gracious refusal, they will cease asking her, and long before anybody could possibly suppose that they would not be pleased and flattered by her assent. They will be a little disappointed at her firmness, but in their hearts they will esteem her all the more for it. This might lead us on to another argument in favour of the conduct we have been advocating; indeed, there are several other considerations which we have forborne to urge. We have preferred to restrict ourselves to the consideration of two motives, one of which appeals to charity, and the other to self-interest. In pressing both, we have found a fresh illustration of that profound truth, so well expressed in Pope's line, that “true self-love and social are the same.” The married woman who abstains from dancing shows exquisite consideration for the feelings of others, and, in the long run, perhaps in a still greater degree, spares her own.

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MR. GLADSTONE ON SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SPEAKING of the author of ‘Waverley’ as a writer of romances, Mr. Gladstone observed that Scott was a great purifier, and he deeply regretted that there seemed to be some danger of his works ceasing to be read. Scott was one of those who might claim for himself in prose that honour which belonged, in great part, to Wordsworth in verse, of elevating and purifying the aim of poetry, of directing it to nobler objects, and excluding from it, whatever might be the temptation to pander to more depraved tastes, whatever tended to defile and to debase. Another quality in which Scott was more remarkable still was his power of reviving antiquity. He (Mr. Gladstone) did not know whether he was right, but his belief was that in that extraordinary power of calling forth from the sepulchre the dry bones of former ages, of clothing them with sinew and with flesh, causing them to live and move before our eyes, and us to live and move among them, as if we belonged to them and they belonged to us — in that peculiar and very rare power Scott was unrivalled among all the literary men the world had ever produced. Scott grew up with Jacobite predilections; and it must be admitted that in respect to one conspicuous character he had drawn a picture that was



not true; and that was the picture of Mary Queen of Scots. It was not his fault: it was the revelations that had been made by historical inquiry since his time that had chiefly tended to draw down that Queen from the elevation upon which her lamentable death had mainly availed to place her, and to exhibit her to the world in the character of a very beautiful, a very clever, but at the same time, though we might hope she was purified by the affliction of her later days, a very bad woman. Scott did not know that; and one was almost glad that, with his affection for the Stuart family in all generations of it, he was spared the pain of those disclosures. He (Mr. Gladstone) owned that he himself grew up with something like a worship of the Queen of Scots, which was entirely due to the novels of Scott; and undoubtedly the caution ought to be taken by the readers of Scott's works with reference to that one particular instance of character, which he — not knowingly, for he was a genuine lover of the truth — had been led to draw in colours different from the true ones. In considering the Jacobite predilections of Scott, it should be borne in mind that when he was a boy Scotland was yet full of horror at the cruelties which had attended the suppression of the rebellion of 1745. And that was an example that went to show how cruelty, like every bad and vicious thing, tended to produce a reaction unfavourable to the very purpose it was intended to serve. Mr. Gladstone read several passages from Lockhart's biography of Scott. In conclusion, he said that Sir Walter had left us a double treasure, the memory of himself and the possession of his works. Both of those would endure. The recollection of a character so noble, so simple, so generous as his could not pass away. All that was best and highest in the age of chivalry was brought down by him into the midst of an age of invention, of criticism, of movement, of increased command over the powers of external nature, and, possibly, of an increasing servility to the wealth and luxury which by the use of those powers we were enabled to attain. As to his works, they were immortal. Nothing but the extinction of civilization could possibly extinguish Scott. If we did not now appreciate him as we ought, it was our misfortune, not his. The fashion of the moment might prefer the newest to the best; but as the calm order of nature was resumed after a storm, so the permanent judgment of mankind would regain its equilibrium, and would render the honours of poetical and literary achieve-

ment where they were due. These remarks had been addressed to a local audience, an audience of neighbours and of friends. They were hasty and familiar, and far beneath their subject, and would but ill bear criticism; yet he should not regret having addressed them if what he had said should tend in one willing heart or in one willing mind to produce a more reverent, a more just, and a more affectionate appreciation of the great Sir Walter Scott. (Prolonged applause.)

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From The Tomahawk.

#### VALETUDINARIAN CHRISTIANITY.

THAT highly entertaining, if not absolutely lively case, which under the title of "*Martin v. Mackonochie*," is destined to play no unimportant part in the history of ecclesiastical dispute in the nineteenth century, has afforded us matter for a good deal of sober reflection. Of this, however, hereafter. For the moment, we merely wish to suggest to Churchmen of a certain school a new line of defence that has been recently supplied by one of the able counsel engaged for the defendant. In his anxiety to clear his client from any possible *souçon* of impropriety in the habitual use of incense, the learned gentleman in question (was it Mr. Prideaux?) hinted that this ritualistic addition to the services at St. Alban's might have been made on strictly sanitary principles. The congregation was poor, it was composed of the dregs of a bad neighbourhood, and, in short, needed a decided fumigation. This idea is at once original and vigorous. It places ritualism on quite a different basis, and if it does not reflect much credit on the discretion of its propounder, it at least says a good deal for that gentleman's valour. Here is a challenge flung boldly into the very face of the *Record* that even that amiably-disposed journal may not be unable to overlook. Who in the world can object to such ritualism as this? No symbol, no doctrine — nothing but mere hygienic precaution! Let us suggest something in the shape of a catechism, that must disarm all further opposition: —

Q. — What is the cope?

A. — A sort of ecclesiastical overcoat, to be worn by rheumatically-disposed ministers.

Q. — Can you tell me when it first came into use?

A. — Yes; in the year A.D. 372, when Gregory III. adopted it as a preventive against influenza.

Q. — Quite right, my child ; and now can you tell me why it is sometimes adorned with worked flowers, and variously ornamented with fringe, gold, or satin ?

A. — When the case is considered severe, these things are not unfrequently added for the sole purpose of increasing its warmth.

Q. — You rightly refer ceremonial to its true origin, — a desire to minister to the comfort and health of those engaged in services of a religious character. Can you tell me why candles are lighted upon the altar ?

A. — Yes, I can, and will. They are lighted in order that the heat produced by combustion may create an upward current of air, and thus carry off the noxious gas not unfrequently generated in crowded places of public resort.

Q. — You are quite right, my child ; and now let me hear you reply briefly to the questions I am about to put to you. Why is the surplice worn in the pulpit ?

A. — Black is a colour that is painful to the eyes. Out of consideration for those of the congregation who are affected by looking at the black gown, the white surplice is worn.

Q. — What is the use of flowers ?

A. — They supply oxygen, and thereby counteract the injurious effects of too much carbonic acid.

Q. — Why is the service intoned ?

A. — To strengthen the lungs of the minister and the congregation.

Q. — Why is the organ to be used throughout ?

A. — For the purpose of invigorating the legs of the organist, and of giving plenty of exercise to the blower.

Q. — You talk of exercise, my child : Can you now tell me why processions in church are not unfrequently organised ?

A. — Yes. Exercise is in itself a healthful, and therefore desirable thing. Processions are therefore organised in church in order that the officiating clergy and choristers may have the benefit of a walk.

Q. — Quite right, my child. And now, perhaps you can tell me, lastly, why in these processions banners are often carried ?

A. — I can. They are to provide against rain, in the event of the roof suddenly falling in.

And so on.

On the merits of the various questions at issue in the Ecclesiastical Court we have no opinion to express, but if practices are to be defended, it is better that those who undertake to shield them should do so uncompromisingly and on intelligible grounds. If, how-

ever, there is a party in the Church of England who take their stand upon "incense as a disinfectant," we strongly recommend them to get in a supply of Messrs. Rimmel's vaporisers forthwith. Let them be sure the "*Censer*" by any other name would smell, not only as sweet, but a good deal sweeter to a large section of their opponents.

From The Tomahawk.

#### THE RELIGION OF SELF.

TRULY we are a great, wise, and wonderful people, we English, and why all the nations of the habitable globe do not fall down and worship us is one of those problems for which no system of politics or philosophy extant furnishes an adequate solution. When we pause in the great race for a moment, draw a long breath and look around us, the wonder is, how we manage to exist at all in scenes of such dazzling and wondrous perfection as those in which our favoured lot is cast. And the enquiring mind turning away its abashed gaze from the national effulgence into its own comparatively shady depths, naturally asks by what means and upon what plan this great and glorious edifice of English society has been constructed, before which, as is well known, less happy countries become green with envy or red with rage and malice. Being then, as we are no doubt, immeasurably the richest, the happiest, the most free, and glorious of all nations, it is natural that some of us should inquire for the principles by which we have attained to that proud position, and which may be expected before any very long time has elapsed, to land us in a state of perfection which will be feebly and inadequately described as a heaven upon earth. Now it is only necessary to recal all that has been done and said for the last fifty years to perceive at once that this magnificent prospect has been attained and worked up to and realised, slowly, perhaps, but certainly, solely through the beneficent and hallowing influence of our English religion. There are nations content to worship Brama and Vishnu, of whom we know little, and care less ; nations who bow down before the sun, which for our happiness we never see ; nations too which retain a faith in revelations of various kinds and unequal value, and nations which are so eccentric as neither to worship nor to believe in anything at all.

For all these we can but sigh and wish they may be brought to a better frame of mind, but for ourselves we hold fast, and ever mean to hold fast to the one great religion of Self, undefiled and pure as it was derived from its first apostle, the glorious and much maligned Cain. Since his day it has survived through all the vicissitudes of time, in some shape or another. It has been oppressed by laws, stamped with opprobrium by opinion, and its professors have been persecuted with relentless severity by Mankind at large; but they have held to their trust with a noble endurance; through all the long ages there has never been wanting a little band ready and eager to sacrifice kith, kin, feelings, sympathies, and all else to the one great cause; and now, at last, in this ever memorable nineteenth century, the time has arrived when no longer in holes and corners but in the full light of day, they may profess and follow their faith, for it has been taken — openly taken up and put into practice by a whole nation, which posterity will honour for the noble effort, and which even modesty does not prevent us from saying is no other than England. See what the faith has effected. The doxology of Self is not more plain, simple, and comprehensible than the actual practical carrying out of its precepts, and they have been applied thoroughly and completely through all the acts and relations of life, for herein also is the great and signal merit of this great religion, that it is for the mart as well as for the closet, for nations not less than for families, for families as well as for individuals.

Have you vexed questions of trade and commerce to settle? Breathe a prayer to the Spirit of Self, and you are rewarded instantly by a revelation of free trade and unrestricted cheating. Do you find the want of a guiding hand through the intricate regions of statecraft and international relations? Another prayer, and you have borne in upon you the heaven-born idea of non-intervention. Edifying spectacle. "You, Denmark, are bound to me and I to you, by all the ties which have ever been held powerful enough to make one man or one nation come to the succour of another; you are robbed, beaten, swallowed up, extinguished by a big bully; alas! were it not for this non-intervening emanation of my religion I would help you, but Self forbids that I should do so." Or, again, "You, the Northern States of America, have a war on your hands, — a war waged for the suppression of that great blot of slavery about

which I have been worrying and abusing you so long. Heaven knows that I should desire to give you aid and comfort — but then the dictates of my religion are, that your great Republic should be broken up, and much against my natural desires I must perforce lend a hand to the pious work." Or is there any question as to the manner in which social relations are best to be carried on? Do you want to know how to demean yourself towards your neighbour? The great Religion again bids you — and it is your glory that you obey its behests with so single a mind — simply to make the most out of them, and if a woman loves you, or a friend trusts you, the consequences of such an irreligious act must be upon their own heads.

Here, then, are the grand and simple principles which have made England what she is, and brought such happiness to her people. Nevertheless, there is beginning to stalk abroad a spirit of schism and heresy which we trust has only to be pointed out in order to be at once stifled and extinguished. Infidelity is the order of the day, and it has extended its baneful influence even over the Religion of Self. This is the secret of several phenomena which to statesmen, political economists, and other high priests of the faith, appear to be all but inexplicable. How is it that our peasantry starve more or less quietly and decently within sight and sound of bloated wealth and wasteful extravagance; that our paupers hold themselves happy in the possession of the luxuries of rabbit-hutches and skilky; that our mechanics are content to exercise sparingly the sacred right of man to murder his fellow-man whenever he will not belong to the same union; that our tradesmen very often charge us no more than 300 per cent. profit, and only swindle us whenever they get the chance in their weights and measures; and that we are all of us so very willing to forego the strict rights with which Nature has invested us in diminution of the good things of this life, which we might properly claim and seize by any means open to us, and that for the sake of our fellow-citizens in this great country? The frame of mind which can result in such monstrous and portentous phenomena, can only arise from infidelity to the Religion of Self; we are already hesitating, doubting, sliding, and if we do not take heed in time the nation may be dragged down lower and lower, until at last it may reach the very blackest depths of unselfishness. It behoves all those who understand why they were sent

into the world, to withstand this backsliding tendency, and to do their utmost for the preservation, extension, and glorification of that enlightened and glorious faith, to which we owe all we are, and all we are likely to be!

From The Examiner, Feb. 15.

## SIR DAVID BREWSTER.

WE regret to announce that SIR DAVID BREWSTER, the venerable Principal of the University of Edinburgh, died on Monday evening last, at his seat, Allersley House, near Melrose. This distinguished philosopher was born at Jedburgh on the 11th of December, 1781, and he had, therefore, obtained the ripe age of eighty-seven. He was educated for the Church of Scotland, of which he became a licentiate; and in 1800 received the honorary degree of M.A. from the University of Edinburgh. In 1808 he undertook the editorship of the 'Edinburgh Encyclopedia,' which was not finished till 1830. In 1807 he received the honorary degree of LL.D. from the University of Aberdeen, and subsequently the degrees of A.M. from Cambridge and of D.C.L. from Oxford and Durham. In 1808 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and after filling the offices of secretary and vice-president was elected president in 1864. In 1815 Dr. Brewster received the Copley medal of the Royal Society for his discovery of the law of the polarisation of light by reflection, and soon after was admitted a fellow of that body. In 1816 the Institute of France adjudged to him half of the prize of 3,000 francs, awarded for the most important discoveries made in Europe, in any branch of science, during the two preceding years; and in 1819 Dr. Brewster received from the Royal Society the Rumford gold and silver medals, the Royal gold and silver medals, for his discoveries on the polarisation of light, and from the Royal Society of Edinburgh the Keith prize twice, for his discovery of two new fluids in minerals and his analysis of solar light. In 1816 he invented the kaleidoscope, the patent right of which was evaded, so that the inventor gained little beyond fame, though the large sale of the instrument must have produced considerable profit. He is the inventor of the lenticular stereoscope, now in universal use. In 1825 the Institute of France elected Dr. Brewster a corresponding member; and he has received the same honour from the

Royal Academies of Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Belgium, and the United States. In 1831 Sir D. Brewster proposed the scientific meeting at York which led to the establishment of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; in 1831 he received the decoration of the Hanoverian Guelphic Order, and in 1832 the honour of knighthood from William IV. In 1838 he was nominated by the Crown Principal of the United Colleges of St. Salvator and St. Leonard, St. Andrew's, and in 1859 he was appointed Principal of the University of Edinburgh by the unanimous vote of the Lord Provost, magistrates, and council of the city. Sir David Brewster has edited and written various works, besides contributing largely to the *Edinburgh*, the *Quarterly*, and the *North British Reviews*. He also wrote 'More Worlds than One,' in reply to Professor Whewell's 'Plurality of Worlds.' In Jan., 1849, Sir David was elected one of the eight foreign associate members of the Academy of Sciences in the Imperial Institute of France, vacant by the death of the celebrated chemist, M. Berzelius. Sir David received from the late King of Prussia the Prussian Order of merit, founded by Frederick the Great; and in 1855 the Emperor of France conferred upon him the decoration of an Officer of the Legion of Honour.

## SENSITIVENESS.

BY DR. NEWMAN.

TIME was, I shrank from what was right,  
From fear of what was wrong;  
I would not brave the sacred fight,  
Because the foe was strong.

But now I cast that finer sense  
And sorer shame aside;  
Such dread of sin was indolence,  
Such aim at Heaven was pride.

So, when my Saviour calls, I rise  
And calmly do my best;  
Leaving to him, with silent eyes,  
Of hope and fear, the rest.

I step, I mount where he has led;  
Men count my haltings o'er;—  
I knew them; yet, though self I dread,  
I love his precept more.

## MUSTERED OUT.

Let me lie down,  
Just here in the shade of the cannon-torn tree,  
Here, low in the trampled grass, where I may  
see  
The surge of the combat; and where I may hear  
The glad cry of victory, cheer upon cheer:  
Let me lie down.

Oh, it was grand!  
Like the tempest we charged, in the triumph to  
share;  
The tempest — its fury and thunder were there;  
On, on, o'er the entrenchments, over living and  
dead,  
With the foe under foot and our flag over head:  
Oh, it was grand!

Weary and faint,  
Prone on the soldier's couch, ah how can I rest  
With this shot-shattered head and sabre-pierced  
breast?  
Comrades, at roll-call, when I shall be sought,  
Say I fought till I fell, and fell where I fought,  
Wounded and faint.

Oh, that last charge!  
Right through the dread hell-fire of shrapnell  
and shell,  
Through, without faltering — clear through  
with a yell,  
Right in their midst, in the turmoil and gloom:  
Like heroes we dashed at the mandate of Doom!  
Oh, that last charge!

It was a duty!  
Some things are worthless, and some others so  
good,  
That nations who buy them pay only in blood:  
For Freedom and Union each man owes his  
part,  
And here I pay my share all warm from my  
heart:

It is a duty!  
Dying at last!  
My mother dear mother, with meek, tearful eye,  
Farewell! and God bless you, forever and aye!  
Oh that I now lay on your pillowing breast,  
To breathe my last sigh on the bosom first  
pressed:

Dying at last!  
I am no saint,  
But, boys, say a prayer. There's one that be-  
gins:  
"Our Father!" and then says — "Forgive us  
our sins!"  
Don't forget that part, say that strongly, and  
then  
I'll try to repeat it, and you'll say, Amen!  
Ah, I'm no saint!

Hark! there's a shout!  
Raise me up, comrades! We have conquered,  
I know!  
Up, up on my feet, with my face to the foe!  
Ah, there flies the flag, with the Star Spangles  
bright,  
The promise of glory, the symbol of right!  
Well they may shout!

I am mustered out!  
O God of our Fathers, our freedom prolong,  
And tread down rebellion, oppression, and  
wrong!  
O, land of earth's hope, on thy blood-reddened  
sod  
I die for the Nation, the Union, and God!  
I'm mustered out.

## THE HUNGRY SEA.

The fierce wind drove o'er hedgerow and lea,  
It bowed the grasses, it broke the tree, —  
It shivered the topmost branch of the tree!  
And it buried my love in the deep, deep sea,  
In the dark lone grave of the hungry sea, —  
Woe is me!

The bonnie white daisy closed her e'e,  
And bent to the blast that swept the lea, —  
Blossom and grass bowed low on the lea,  
But white sails dipped and sank in the sea;  
They dipped and sank in the pitiless sea!  
Woe is me!

'Neath the mother's breast in the leafy tree,  
Nestled and crept her birdies wee,  
Nor heeded the blast, though weak and wee.  
But no mother can save on the stormy sea;  
Deaf to her cry is the merciless sea!  
Woe is me!

Oh, well for the fishers of Galilee,  
When they left their nets by that inland sea,  
To follow Him who walked on the sea;  
At whose word the pitiless waves did flee —  
The hungry, insatiate waves did flee,  
And left them free!

Golden the light on flower and tree  
In the land where my sailor waits for me, —  
The country of heaven, that has no sea —  
No ruthless, moaning, terrible sea;  
There is the haven where I would be!  
FRANCES FREELING BRODERIP.  
— Argosy.